*Week ending October 23 1954* *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

# JOHN BULL

**HUNTING IN THE ARCTIC: New exciting adventures of Dr. Moody**

**MY LEFT FOOT by CHRISTY BROWN**

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EDITORIAL

# War on waiting

MISS GWLADYS OLIVER is a woman with a mission which anyone who has ever been an out-patient at a hospital will support. It is to cut down the time that patients have to wait.

She has a unique job: out-patients officer at Westminster Hospital, London. Seven hundred patients a day come into the hospital. She tries to ensure that they are seen as quickly as possible after they arrive.

This is not easy in a teaching hospital, where some patients are used for observation by students, but she is succeeding.

"WE have recently introduced a system of booking established patients for each five-minute period throughout the time that doctors are there," she says. "If any patient feels that he is being kept waiting unfairly I see him and explain the reason for the delay."

Lord Nathan, chairman of the hospital, adds: "We try to treat patients like human beings, and to fit ourselves to them, not the other way round."

LORD NATHAN
*"Patients are human"*

This is in striking contrast to many other hospitals. Two-hour delays without explanation are not as common as they were, but there are still hospitals which treat all out-patients as necessary nuisances.

In June this year the Minister of Health, Mr. Ian Mcleod, became so concerned about the don't-care attitude of some hospitals that he issued a sharp reminder to all regional hospital boards and governors.

"The complaints are widespread and well-founded," said the circular. It listed four points of criticism: general delays, late-arriving doctors, badly organized appointments systems, and little attempt to win patients' confidence or consider their comfort.

SOON the Minister is to call for a report from every hospital on how much waiting has been eliminated. He should ask the patients, too.

Meanwhile, let those who are kept for a long time and in ignorance, take heart. They should complain to the hospital management, to the regional board and to the local paper. The Ministry is prepared to support the public which is now the owner of the hospitals.

There is a real danger that patients will avoid attending hospital rather than face delays which waste time and money. First job of all hospitals is to appoint an out-patients officer, like Miss Oliver. Their second job is to see that patients are treated, not as cattle, but as human beings.

## ON OTHER PAGES


***Fiction***

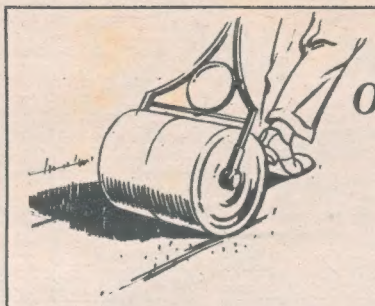
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| TO BE SOLD THIS DAY | *by Stephen Black* | 12 |
| THE LIGHTS OF BRIA | *by Leigh Vance* | 20 |
| DESTINATION UNKNOWN (Part 5) | *by Agatha Christie* | 24 |

***Non-Fiction***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ARCTIC HUNTER | *by Dr. J. Moody and W. van Embden* | 9 |
| FLORA ROBSON, UGLY DUCKLING WHO BECAME A STAR | *by Norman Phillips* | 14 |
| MY LEFT FOOT (Part 4) | *by Christy Brown* | 17 |
| FLYING CHRISTINE RACES DEATH | *by Don Everitt* | 22 |
| PERCY MUIR GAMBLES ON TREASURES FROM THE PAST | *by John Ennis* | 27 |

FREE SPEECH: 4, 6. THIS WEEK'S COVER: 6.
CONSIDER YOUR VERDICT: 32. WHO'S WHO: 38.





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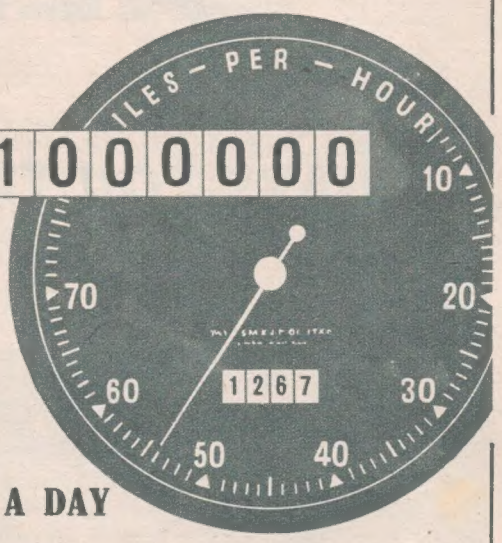


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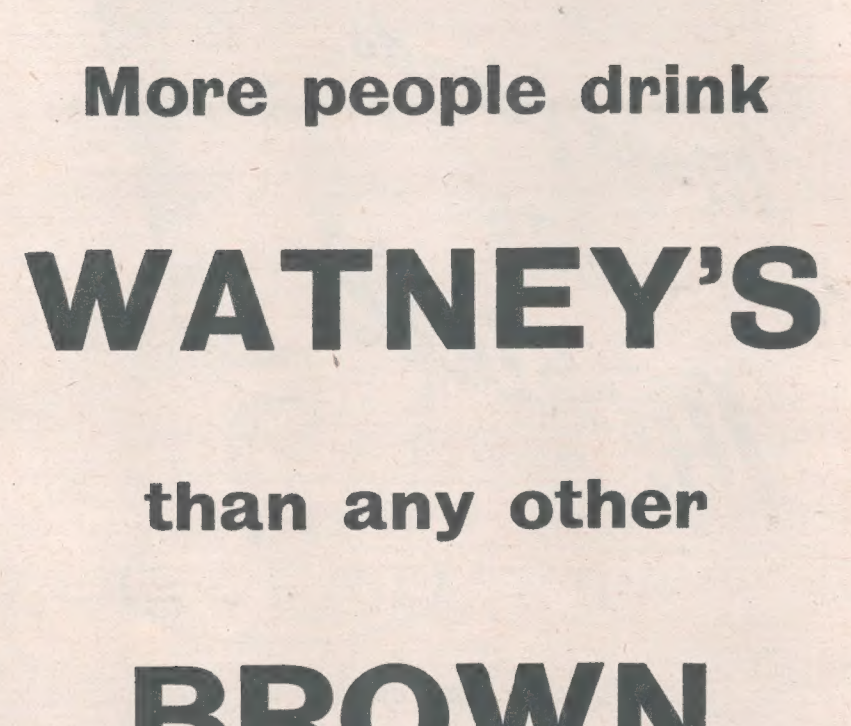





JOHN BULL 189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1
OCT. 23 1954 VOL. 96 NO. 2521 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

# FREE SPEECH

## Will women get the office jobs?

WHEN I joined my firm in 1912, they were employing sixty men as clerks. and one woman—a "lady typewriter."

Today, I am the manager; although the company has expanded, there are only twenty men on my staff list—and 130 women. We have calculating machines that can almost think, enabling a girl to do in ten minutes a job that would have taken the old-time clerk half the day.

The significance of this was shown clearly by one of the girls here who told me: "For the past two years, I have supported my husband so that he could study for his Bachelor of Commerce degree. Now that he's got it, he can't find an office post that offers him more than three hundred and fifty pounds a year. He's filling in time driving a lorry—at ten pounds a week."

Surely this points to a white-collar revolution, where women—and machines—will do all the office jobs, while their menfolk return to manual work.—J. PARKER, London, S.W.

### Where's His Line?

I ENJOY sitting on a bus or walking through a London store with my father — just to hear the remarks that people make about him.

"He's one of those foreigners, dear." "A gipsy, of course. . . ." "Must be a Spaniard." "Italian, I should think. . . ." These are only some of the things that they say about an ordinary East Coast fisherman who has worn a pair of golden ear-rings for more than fifty years.

A sprightly gentleman of seventy-four, he finds the comments as amusing as I do.—MRS. R. K. WATTS, Roman Way, Islington, London.

*An ancient superstition among seamen holds that a pair of ear-rings protects the wearer from drowning.*

### Coach Built

DURING the housing shortage after the first World War, many people built themselves homes out of old railway rolling stock.

I have come across a former royal

train and a Canadian Pacific coach used in this way. The bungalow in the photograph was built round some of the carriages of Marshal Foch's H.Q. train, aboard which the first armistice agreement was signed at Compiègne in November, 1918. The building is at Middleton-on-Sea, near Bognor Regis; the carriages are finely panelled inside, and the map frames can still be seen.—N. M. WOODALL, Southbourne, Hants.

*British Railways state that disused coaches are still sold, when available. The price depends on the length of the coach, and averages 25s. a foot.*

### Game Crock

OUR housing estate was still uncompleted when the first tenants moved into their new homes. Inevitably, the children wanted to play in the houses still under construction, but the builder was a clever man.

He towed a broken-down motor-car on to the estate, leaving it well away from the building sites. Naming it "The Old Crock," he presented it

to the children. The car is now their favourite playground, and building goes ahead uninterrupted.—MRS. J. WALKER, 15 Challcote Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham.

### Borrowed Past

THIS summer, I arranged to stay in a hotel in Grenoble where, I was told, Napoleon had lodged.

My taxi driver took me to a modern building in the centre of the town. "But I thought Napoleon stayed here," I protested.

"Well, they've got his bed inside," said the driver. They had: it was a massive mahogany affair, which the manager proudly showed me. When I questioned him, he admitted reluctantly that the Emperor had stayed in a much older hotel round the corner, at one time owned by the same hotelier.

To give his new premises some history, he imported the bed. Not content with that, he rechristened the old hotel, borrowing the name by which Napoleon knew it for his modern building.—R. JONES, Manchester.

### Native Knack

I HAVE just returned from a seven-year stay in Australia. I find that most people over here regard the Aborigines as a fast-decreasing race of inferior, "weedy" and unintelligent beings. This is incorrect.

One of my best friends at school over there was an Aboriginal boy whose skill at games and quiet sense of humour made him extremely popular.

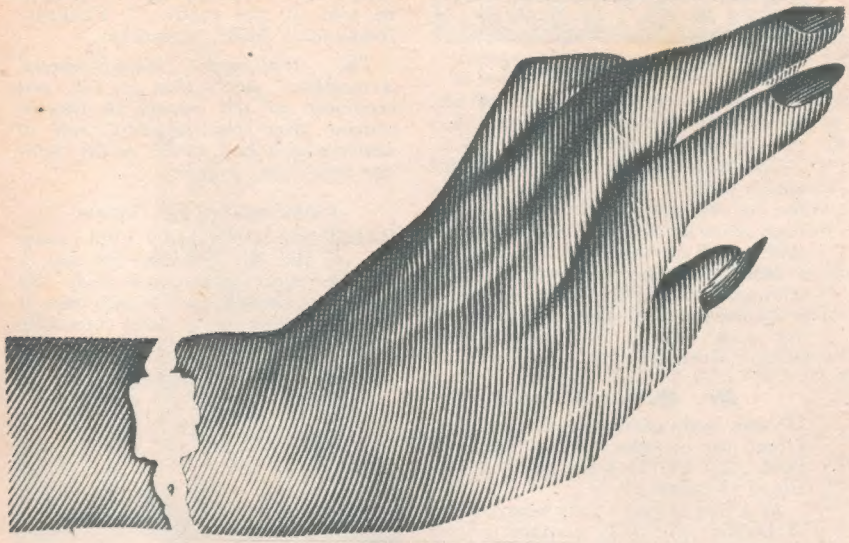
Like most of his race, once he had

*Continued on page 6*

**IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK**

## THE BATTLE THAT ENDED THE BATTLESHIPS

**by Capt. B. H. LIDDELL HART**



This is the forty-ninth Ingersoll Christmas—when thousands of wrists (and pockets) will welcome a brand-new Ingersoll watch. For that special wrist you have in mind there are Ingersoll ladies' watches from 85/- and Ingersoll men's wrist watches from 42/6—all jewelled for accuracy and long life. Sturdy pocket watches too, from 23/9d. Backed by the famous Ingersoll all-in free-service guarantee (mainspring included), there are over 100 models from 23/9 to £10.

*Choose one at your Jewellers.*

## *Someone's wrist is waiting for an*

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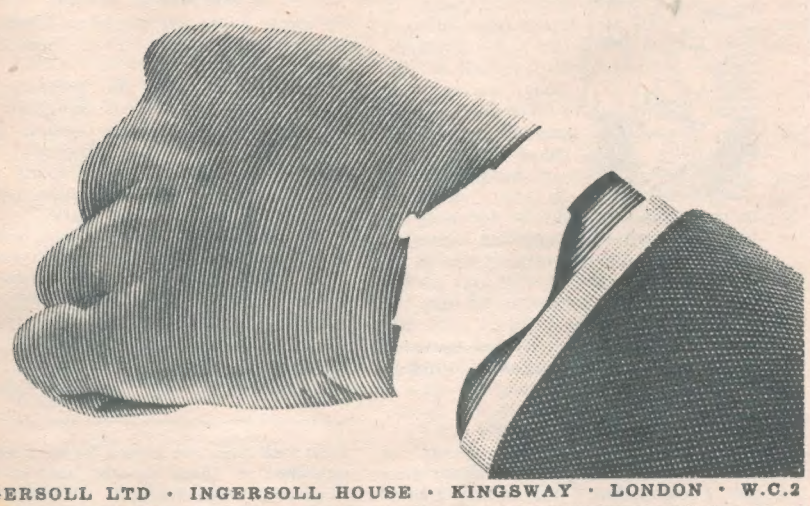

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# "Where do we go from here?"

We cannot imagine a way of life without motor transport directly or indirectly it affects every one of us. The industry that was born at the turn of the century is growing still.

Each year the previous year's record production figures are surpassed. In 1954, the safety and comfortable running of nearly a million more British motor vehicles will depend on one of the inventions that made modern motoring possible—that of the first practicable pneumatic tyre by John Boyd Dunlop.

It is Dunlop that does the most to satisfy the tremendous demand. From its factories come tyres for the family runabout and the 100 m.p.h. car ; tyres for trucks and buses ; tyres for transporters and tractors ; tyres for the jungle and desert; tyres that are tubeless; tyres for a world to roll on . . . And products such as rims and wheels, Dunlopillo seating, rubber wings and mats.

What new challenges lie ahead? Where *do* we go from here? Already we are glimpsing the future in turbo-jet cars, plastic bodywork and revolutionary new braking systems. In this new era, the inventiveness, enterprise and effort of the men and women of Dunlop will still serve the manufacturer and the user and all who make up the world of motoring.

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the pen the whole world likes


## FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

grasped the white man's way of life, he fitted in perfectly. He came near the top of the form in all subjects.

Nor had he lost the skill of his native race; I will always remember the day we were walking through the high grass at the edge of the playing fields, and he bent over to flick up a four-foot snake; he cracked it like a whip, breaking its back. He threw it casually aside, and we continued our walk.—PHILIP HEYWOOD, King's School, Rochester.

### Dr. Bob's Guests

IT was with particular interest that I read the introduction to "My Left Foot" by Dr. Robert Collis. (JOHN BULL, October 2.)

As I live in one of the poorer parts of Dublin, my daily contact is with people like Christy Brown. For many years little was done for them, until Dr. Collis and a small group of his Good Samaritans opened a door for these sufferers.

One winter's evening I saw a group of children entering a restaurant in the centre of Dublin. Some of them, I knew, were attending clinics, and their families were all poor.

I asked them about their good fortune in dining out, and they told me that "Doctor Bob" and his workers were seeing to it that they got a good meal every day. That work still goes on.—PAT MCDONNELL, North Strand, Dublin.

*Dr. Collis, who is Chairman of the Cerebral Palsy Association of Ireland, used the profits from his successful play "Marrowbone Lane" to found the Marrowbone Lane Fund for helping children in need. He has a committee of helpers, and the fund is supported by contributions. Its aim is to give the children food first, then clothes.*

### Shop Lifting

MOST of the small Chinese - owned shops in Malaya are open to the street. Stock is piled high on rows of side shelves, and spread on the floor, leaving the customer just enough room to move about.

A cash desk is a rarity, and a money drawer would be too easy to rob, so the shopkeeper often keeps his money in an open shopping basket. A rope is tied to the handle and passed through a meat-hook screwed into the ceiling. Money is dropped into the basket, which is then hauled upwards to safety.—MRS. LILIAN DUGDALE, Johore Bahru, Malaya.

### Waste Paper

NEEDING another two yards of wallpaper to complete a decorating job, I found that I had to buy a complete roll, at 16s.

Why can't wallpaper shops reserve rolls of the more expensive papers to be sold by the yard?—J. PERKINS, Ribblesdale Road, Streatham.

*The Wallpaper Manufacturers' Association says that it is not economic to sell papers in lengths shorter than the standard roll of eleven and a half yards, as the wastage would be so great.*

### Crocodile In Avon

WHEN my cousin and I were canoeing on the River Avon, we saw a strange object on the river bed. We pulled it aboard and found that it was the body of a baby crocodile about two feet long. Yet no reptiles

were missing from the nearby zoo. To prove our story, my cousin Peter Lambert (left) and I had our photograph taken with the crocodile.—NIGEL STONESTREET, Wickfield Avenue, Christchurch, Hants.

*Crocodiles are never found in their natural state in Britain. It has since been discovered that this one was brought back from Hongkong as a pet, by a naval rating. A spell of cold weather killed it, and it was buried beside the river. Heavy rains must have washed it into the stream.*

### Loonie's Court

MY collection of unusual street names ("Free Speech," October 2) includes: Loonie's Court, Stockport; Upper Whiskers, Halifax; Kill Devil Hill, Cirencester; There And Back Again Lane, Bristol; Top-O'-Th'-Lane, Bolton; Hole-In-The-Wall Street, Caernarvon; and Whip-ma-Whop-ma Gate, York.—MRS. M. SOWERSBY, West Street, Southend-on-Sea.

### Mourning Move

IN 1951, I was privileged to attend a gipsy's funeral. ("Free Speech," September 11.)

Tradition forbade the presence of the dead gipsy's eldest daughter at the ceremony. After his caravan and belongings had been burned, the family left the site, to "roam the countryside for twelve months without settling in any one place."

By custom, they had to talk about their deceased relative round their camp fires.—JOHN MORTON, Lovett Street, Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire.

*Each year, on the anniversary of the death, it is customary for the gipsy's relatives to return to the grave and sit beside it, fasting, for many hours.*

---

**John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service**

## THIS WEEK'S COVER

ALL the family's clucking, cooing and gaping mouths don't mean a thing. This is one time when babies know best what is good for them. A recent experiment proved it. Plates of food were set before a group of children, who ate as much as they could of whatever they fancied. One turned down sweets for cod liver oil. Pulling a wry face, another kept taking salt; it was what his body craved. But here is another—more immediately useful—bit of science for Thomas Sherwood La Fontaine's cover parents. Baby has a reflex. Tap his upper lip lightly and his mouth will thrust out as though he is sucking. Then, quickly, in with that food.

***SMOOTH** is the keyword to describe fine singing says Gigli, greatest of all living tenors.,*

# SMOOTH

## IS THE WORD FOR CRAVEN 'A', TOO

**Smooth to the throat.** The fine tobacco of Craven 'A', the clean, fresh cork tip, give you smoking that's smoother to your throat than any you've ever known. **Smooth to the taste.** The cork tip of a Craven 'A' keeps it cool and easy-drawing, rich and smooth, to the very end. **Smooth to the lips.** Notice the firm feel of the cork tip. It never sticks to your lips but keeps the end of the cigarette firm and dry.

**Every Craven 'A' smoker enjoys fine cigarettes made smoother by cork**

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*In a 'dry martini'*

*better drink*

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**Good Mixers make it this way**

Two-thirds Martini Dry
One-third Gin.
Stir well with ice.
Strain and serve
with olive in glass.

Two-thirds Martini Sweet
One-third Gin.
Shake or stir well with ice.
Serve with lemon peel
or cherry.

*In a 'gin and it'*

*better drink*

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SWEET

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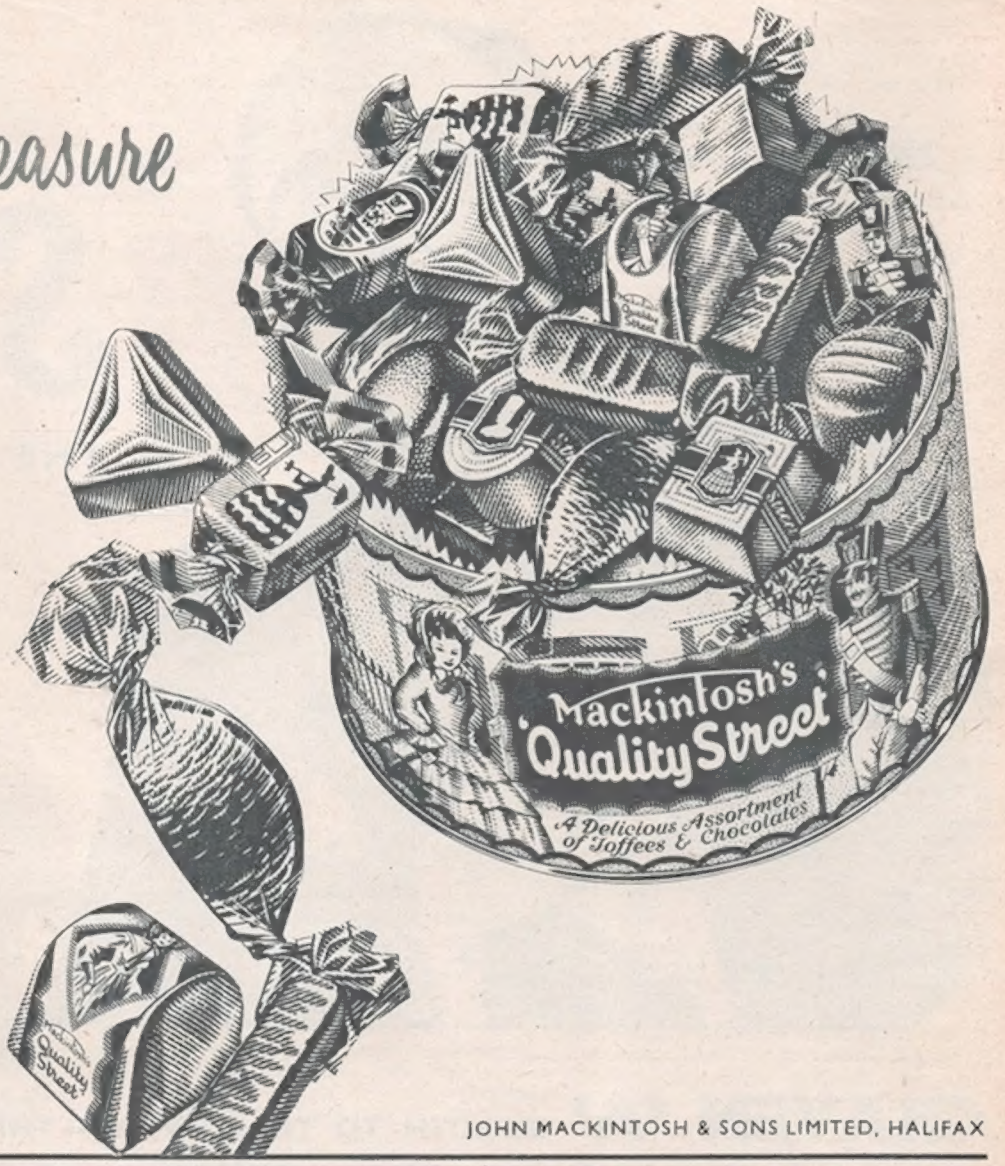
... choose Quality Street with its eighteen gaily-wrapped varieties of delicious toffees and chocolates—amongst them Chocolate Noisette Paté, Chocolate Toffee Cup, Chocolate Orange Cream, Dessert Toffee, Chocolate Truffle.

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A prospector as well as doctor and explorer, Joe Moody took a Geiger counter with him in his search for uranium

One of Moody's Eskimo guides raises his harpoon to give a wounded walrus the death blow. On one trip, Moody fought off an attack by a hundred walruses out for the kill

# ARCTIC HUNTER

**Dr. Joseph Moody, the young Canadian who thrives on danger, tells the vivid story of his amazing escapes from death when filming walruses, polar bears and seals in the Arctic. This sequel to "Arctic Doctor," a recent John Bull supplement, is in Dr. Moody's own words, recorded by W. de Groot van Embden**

"WATCH OUT, AYRANNI!" I patted down my film equipment and groped around for a gun. A polar bear was only five feet away from our fragile boat and ready to lash out with his powerful claw. But Ayranni, excitement gleaming in his eyes, swung the canoe round at the very last moment, leaving a surprised bear in the foaming wash of our outboard motor. We sped away and then turned again for the approach.

"Ayranni, for God's sake be careful. Don't get excited. You can't even swim."

I was worried. Ayranni the Eskimo was not interested in filming. To him a bear was a bear, and when we had the exceptional luck of sighting the big white animal on an icepan he thought only of killing.

A bear was 1,500 lb. of meat for men and dogs. That was important. But I had taken great pains to explain to Ayranni that I wanted him to get the animals angry before he thought of shooting, so that I could film the excitement of the chase.

He thought that I had lost my mind, but after he had reluctantly fired a few shots into the water, close to the bobbing head of the bear, and had watched the anger mount in its vicious little eyes, he had decided that it was fun and took unbelievable risks. . . .

"Steady now," I said, as I picked up the camera again. The tide of the chase had turned in our favour. We were now following the fast-swimming animal. Then the boat veered —with unbelievable speed the bear had climbed on to an icepan.

I gasped as I saw the elegant trot of this powerful beast. The water dripped from the thick fur that was now sleeked against his muscular body, his small head swung from side to side. He did not growl, he hissed.

Ayranni seemed to think that we might be able to follow him on the ice and steered towards the pan. But then the animal turned and sped to the other side of the floe. He prepared to leap into the water and we quickly

Ayranni the Eskimo faced danger with Moody

Hunters excitedly approach a magnificent walrus bull. When Moody first filmed walruses, he and

brought the canoe round to catch him as he hit the waves on the opposite side of the big chunk of ice.

The sky was clear blue and the water reflected the colour in deeper hues. As far as we could see, icepans of various sizes floated around us in the choppy sea. The coast, barely visible behind us, was ten miles away. I checked my camera and saw that I had twenty-five feet of film left.

Ayranni slowed the engine so that we could follow the bear at a distance of about fifteen feet. Then the animal headed for another ice-pan, a large one. We landed about thirty feet from him and dug the mooring pin into the ice.

Carefully, we walked towards the bear. He was standing on a little hump, three feet high, growling and showing his sharp teeth. Then he reared up, his front paws high above his head; he must have been seven or eight feet tall.

This was too much for Ayranni. He rapidly fired two shots and the bear came down groggily, swaying on his feet, with blood staining his fur. Then, with a last effort, he jumped and landed at our feet, where he turned over and lay still.

### Decided To Become Explorer

Ayranni skinned and dressed the bear while I thought over our good luck. It is seldom that you catch a polar bear in the icefields.

We had started our hunt that morning.

After three years in the Canadian Eastern Arctic as a medical health officer, I had been transferred to a post in warmer regions, but it was not long before I decided to go back to do some private exploring.

During my years with the Government Medical Service, I had travelled nearly 50,000 miles by aircraft, dog-team and canoe, but I had never been able to visit the places that I particularly wanted to see, or to stay for some time in spots of special interest.

After an intensive study of the Arctic, I had been overcome with the desire to establish its potentialities firmly and irrevocably. So I organized a small expedition. For several months I explored, accompanied by only a couple of Eskimo guides.

I had brought with me equipment to make a full-length film, but my most valued asset was a Geiger counter—a device for detecting radio-activity, and thus an invaluable aid in searching for radio-active minerals such as uranium. I was the first prospector to take a Geiger counter into the Arctic.

My finds more than justified my decision to organize the expedition. I made three discoveries that I had to report to the government under the laws on uranium prospecting, and also discovered gold and other valuable metals.

I had shot a few thousand feet of film, but these did not include animal scenes, and so I decided to devote some time to filming animals.

On my first day out with Ayranni, I met the polar bear. Ayranni was a renowned hunter and the best guide for this kind of trip.

In keeping with the law, I had not fired a shot. To preserve animal life in the Arctic, the government has limited all hunting. The natives are allowed to shoot a specified number of animals each year because they provide their stable food, but the white man cannot hunt at all, except in isolated cases where he has been a resident for a long time.

A wounded walrus, preparing to attack, hooks its tusks into an icepan. One walrus which Moody had shot struck at him—and missed by inches

Although I had a licence to hunt, I preferred to leave the shooting to the natives—but I did not hesitate to use my rifle on the day I went out to take films of walruses . . . and was attacked by more than a hundred of them.

Before we started out, Ayranni gave me a warning.

"Walrus dangerous," he said. "Him attack when mad and him kill when wounded."

I asked if that was not the case with many animals.

"Maybe so, but walrus really bad. With tusks they smash boats or pull them under. If you stand on icepan, close to water, him come and hook you with his tusks. When you shoot him, him come at you even if he nearly dead. Him can stretch neck nearly two feet and get you when you think you safe. And walrus can swim faster than boat with ten-horse motor."

"Well, Ayranni," I said, "then just remember not to get as careless as you did with the bear. I want to take movies and that is all."

"Oh, yes, me careful," he said. "You watch."

### The Guns Were Within Reach

With that we took off: and it soon became apparent that I had more respect for Ayranni's warning than he had himself. We went into the icefield where we had spotted many walruses on the previous day. During the night I had heard them, screeching and grunting. In the stillness of an Arctic night you can hear them miles away.

Ayranni was at the rudder and took care of our engine. He had a gun on his knees. I was in the front of the boat with my cameras, and with my .303 rifle within reach.

As soon as we entered the icefield we saw them. There seemed to be a whole colony. More than a hundred walruses were spread around in groups on the various icepans. They seemed to be sleeping, all heaped together in a big hump of flesh. They were formless, and but for the

**Ayranni were attacked by more than a hundred of them. The two men had to shoot their way to safety**

identifying tusks it would have been difficult to single them out.

On one icefloe two young ones were fighting. They hit their tusks together with tremendous force; the bony crackle resounded over the water.

Ayranni steered the boat carefully through the narrow leads between the icepans. "They won't move," he said. "Take your pictures."

But Ayranni had miscalculated. Slowly, the heavy beasts began to stir. They became alarmed by the noisy boat that moved among them. One after another the walruses slipped off the ice until several dozen of them were in the water. They were curious, and their bobbing heads came towards us. I could hear them breathing as they swam.

Soon they surrounded the canoe from all sides, and I saw that Ayranni was getting scared. It became more and more difficult to steer the boat around and between them.

He headed for a nearby icepan. Suddenly, he had to make a fast turn when a huge bull surfaced right in front of the boat. The water splashed and the engine growled. It seemed to make the swimmers very excited and they began to make hostile moves.

They came at us in groups, diving just when I expected they would hit the boat and capsize us. I saw their grey bodies as, with the flick of a flipper, they shot under the canoe.

"Ayranni," I shouted, "they will upset the boat."

"Them never do that," he answered. "Walrus always attack from the side. They swim along canoe and hit tusks against the boat, like a drum, rat-tat-tat-tat. We must get on ice now. Too many walrus." He was really frightened, and yelling excitedly.

Then another quick turn. The propeller came right out of the water, and, with a splut-splut, the engine stopped. I was nearly knocked out of the boat, and my camera dropped from my hands. As I bent down to put it in a safe place, I saw six walrus heads staring at me.

"Ayranni, they're attacking."

"Shoot! Shoot!" he yelled. "Don't let them come near." He worked feverishly over the engine, trying to get it started. We had come close to the icepan, but now strong currents dragged us away.

"Shoot!" he shouted again.

I did. I was too excited to aim and, blindly, shot and loaded, shot and re-loaded. I hit one, and he went down immediately. A red film spread over the water. I hit another on his skull, but the bullet ricocheted and merely left a red gash.

Our attackers were furious now and came at us from all sides.

Just when I did not see a hope for us, the engine started, and, with a leap that threw me down, we raced away, barely missing two heads in front of us.

### Chased By Angry Walruses

The animals were surprised and, for a moment, we left them behind. That moment was not any too long, because they immediately started pursuit and gained on us without effort. But we had reached the icepan. A big walrus was still on it and as we came near he slithered towards us.

Ayranni did not hesitate. His shot rang out and the beast tumbled towards the water, but came to rest on a ledge that stuck out underneath.

The boat hit the ice with tremendous force, but we had no time to get upset about that.

"Pull her up, pull!" Ayranni shouted, but I was already doing so. Within seconds, long, yellow-white tusks were digging into the ice at our feet where the boat had been. Ayranni was shooting furiously.

"Don't let walrus come up," he said, calmer now. "If they get up, we dead."

It seemed that we were beating them off. Some were wounded; the others became more careful.

I heard Ayranni again. "The other side, get the other side."

More danger was approaching. At the far end of the float one walrus had already pulled himself up. I ran over and fired. His head dropped, but he lashed out at me when I ran past. He missed me by a few inches. Another one came up behind me, but I jumped and the weight and

*Continued on page 37*

*Announcing a great new novel of suspense by*

# VICTOR CANNING

YUGOSLAVIA . . . Venice . . . Holland . . . Brazil. For each of his brilliant novels of suspense, Victor Canning has taken a new and exciting setting. Now, for his latest book, which begins in JOHN BULL next week, he has turned to the south of France, to the rugged country near the Spanish border. There, locked in the mountains, rises a vast, crumbling château known as—

# Castle Minerva

The story is told by David Fraser, a young schoolmaster who scraps his holiday plans to act as a boy's tutor at the French resort of Banyuls. He does it to help his best friend, the man who saved his life in the war—Colonel Francis Drexel, D.S.O., M.C., a British agent.

The boy is Prince Jabal of Ramaut, heir to an Arabian "oil throne." If Jabal can get to London, he will renew Britain's right to take Ramaut's oil. But powerful forces in his own state are out to stop him. His life is in danger: it is Fraser's job to guard him night and day.

It looks like a dangerous assignment, and already there are signs—signs which at first mean little to Fraser—that he is being caught up in a net of treachery and deceit.

*Victor Canning*

At Banyuls, he has met Sophie Orbais, and fallen in love. Yet he knows their meeting was no accident: it had been arranged. But by whom, he asks himself, and why? Before he can sort out the puzzle, or learn the truth about Sophie, the net closes suddenly round him. Jabal disappears; a policeman is knifed; and Fraser himself is taken, a prisoner, to the forbidding Castle Minerva. . . .

Tension does not flag for a moment in this enthralling story—the fifth Victor Canning novel to be serialized, before book publication, in JOHN BULL. The others were *A Forest Of Eyes*, *Venetian Bird*, *The House Of The Seven Flies* and *The Man From The Turkish Slave*.

If you have not read his previous books, you will enjoy your first acquaintance with Victor Canning. In *Castle Minerva* he is at his exciting best. Splendidly illustrated by Gerald Fancett, the first long instalment appears . . .

**NEXT WEEK IN JOHN BULL**

# TO BE SOLD THIS DAY

*by* ***STEPHEN BLACK***

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES WOOD

The sale was an agony for Peter. Each time the hammer fell, it was as though a small part of himself had been torn away

DARKNESS WAS CLOSING IN as Peter came up the lane towards Goodger's, and there was a nip in the air. He was leading Polly, the Shire mare. At eighteen, Peter was already a giant: six foot three and still growing broader about the chest and shoulders. Behind Polly, the empty wagon rattled over the hard earth. It made a fat, comfortable sound. Peter spoke very little and very seldom, but he thought a lot.

"The last time. . . ." Peter thought again now.

It had been a summer of "last times": the last haytime, the last harvest, the last row of stooks to be carted—till Peter himself had tossed the last sheaf. This was the last wagon home. Behind him lay the wide stubble of the fields, close cropped and bare. In one corner the great stacks stood sentinel over the emptiness. But Peter knew he would not be there for threshing.

He swung Polly into the yard and backed the wagon under cover. As he deftly unharnessed the mare, his movements and the set of his shoulders seemed to match something in the great Shire. He led her shambling to the stables. The nights were drawing in. It was almost dark as Peter opened the back door and went into the light of the passage leading through to the kitchen.

The passage was filled with men. In a little office at the side, Dad sat at his desk, paying the last of the harvest wages—for the last time. Without speaking, Peter edged past and went into the kitchen. Tea was waiting, Mother busy washing eggs in the scullery. Peter poured himself a cup.

"Eight and a half hours' overtime," Old Fred was saying on the other side of the door.

"No half hours here!" said his father's voice.

"Make it nine then?" he heard Fred suggest blandly. "Be your last harvest at Goodger's, Frank."

"That's right," said Dad. "Thirty-six in all. But the weather's beaten me at last, Fred."

There was the clink of coins, the clump of boots. Then Bill's voice.

"Seven hours' overtime. . . ."

So it went on. The familiar routine of a Friday night. But Dad was right: the weather had beaten him. And Peter knew why. Hard work and good farming were not enough once the subsidies came off. You wanted modern machinery as well: tractors, pick-up balers, grass driers and combines. With these you could beat even the worst of the English weather. With the markets the way they were, one bad season and the old-style farmer cracked. First his nerve would go—then his credit. Dad had lost both these in the last six months. There were a number of ways of raising capital for mechanization, but in truth Dad was past it now.

As the back door banged and the last of the men went off counting his money, Dad came into the kitchen. In remarkable contrast to his son, he was short and wiry; skin and bones with a tight binding of muscle in between. And he was an old man.

Dad threw down a paper package on the table and poured himself a cup of tea. Then he slit the paper with his thumb. The package was full of sale catalogues, fresh from the printer's. He took one and looked at it. Peter took one also. Neither spoke.

"Thursday: October 7th, 1954.
Goodger's Farm: Lower Pelling.
12 miles from Chichester, Sussex.
Catalogue of
Mr. Frank Bailey's Important Sale
60 Cross Shorthorn Friesian Heifers.
150 Southdown Ewes: about half served.
160 White Sussex Fowls, etc., etc.
Farm Machinery and Effects.
Sale Punctually 10.30 a.m.
Cranstone and Son, F.A.I."

Peter skimmed over the pages gloomily. Then he threw down the catalogue. "Many staying on with the new man?" he asked.

"We've all got to live . . ." Dad answered.

"Seems funny to be going," said Peter—the nearest he had yet come to any expression of his thoughts.

"Seems funny for me, too," said Dad, still looking at the catalogue. "Let's hope it's a fine day."

FINE it was—bright and sharp, the trees at the foot of the Downs already tinged with autumn. Out in Long Meadow the farm carts and implements had been drawn up, row upon row. There were haysweeps, mowers, binders and ploughs, all horse-drawn machinery. There were cultivators, ridge rollers, chain harrows, discs and corn drills. At the end of one line was a shepherd's hut on wheels, the metal chimney pointing against the blue sky.

Out in the fields, Old Fred and Peter were rounding up the cattle. They drove them down to the farm to an oak-railed pen at the back of the barns. When the last of the heifers had been edged in, Peter slid the closing rail into place and closed the gap. Fred was on the other side of the pen.

"I'll get the bull down," Peter shouted over the lowing of the herd. "You go and help Dad with the sheep."

**Leaning on the gate, Peter surveyed the field.**

Time was pressing. The auctioneer had already arrived, with his pair of steps and his spotty-faced clerk. Peter's huge legs carried him quickly across the springy turf and through the gate into the field called Highlands. Champion, the great Friesian bull, ran loose in Highlands, where the hedges were banked and the wire good. No one could handle him, except Peter.

The bull was ringed and wearing a halter. Although Fred and many others had tried leading the animal with a pole, it had always ended in disaster. Everyone in Lower Pelling knew about Mr. Bailey's bull. But difficult as he was, Champ had his advantages. He kept the mushroomers off the place in the autumn and the hikers out of the fields in summer.

As Peter walked up, the animal stared at him solidly. There was a feeling between them, almost of friendship.

"Come on, Champ," Peter said and slipped one hand into the halter. Then, quite gently, he led the bull down the field to the gate. It followed meekly, like some domestic pet.

By the time they reached the barns and passed the cattle pen with its steaming press of heifers, the sound of traffic reached them from the lane

He had lived and worked on the farm all his life; now, before his eyes, it was being broken up and sold. Hatred for these people welled up inside him

leading from the village up to the farm. It was an unusual sound for Goodger's, where even tractors were not heard and the quiet murmur of the countryside was only broken at intervals by the drone of aircraft overhead. Champ tossed his horns, snorted and rolled his great eyes.

"Easy, boy," said Peter as he led the animal into the loose box, slipped home the strong oak beam which confined him and then threw in an armful of hay. As he did so, Peter realized that this was perhaps the last job he would ever be expected to do on Goodger's. Champ let out a contented grunt, and started eating.

Up in Long Meadow the traffic sounds had increased and the lane was now jammed with cars and lorries, tight with horse boxes and cattle trucks.

Crowds had already begun to gather in knots around the rows of machinery and "farm effects," and along the side of the field it looked like the parking place at a county show.

They were a mixed bag, those people who had come to the sale: smallholders from the Arun valley, well-to-do farmers from the Weald, landed gentry in riding breeches and hacking jackets, stolid agricultural labourers and their wives, boys and girls making an outing of it—even children playing among the machinery. All these—and apparently the entire village of Pelling as well.

Leaning on the gate into the meadow, Peter looked them over, and hated them all.

Mr. Cranstone, the auctioneer, had set up his steps by Lot One: the haysweep at the end of a line.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "before I start this very important sale of the dead and live stock belonging to Mr. Frank Bailey, who is so well known to you all, I should like to say a few words. Mr. Bailey has farmed Goodger's for thirty-seven years. As a young man he took over from his father, one-time champion breeder of Southdowns. The present Mr. Bailey carried on that fine tradition of Sussex farming, based on fair dealing and hard work. Now he has seen fit to retire. It's up to you to make the best of his sale!"

There was not, as one might expect, any clapping. Just a respectful silence. While Peter was turning over in his mind the bitter euphemisms of the auctioneer's speech, the sale began.

"Valuable horse-drawn haysweep, in perfect condition. Whatm-I-bid? Whatm-I-bid? Ten pound? Eight pound? Whatm-I-bid? All right . . . six pounds. I'm bid six pounds . . . six ten . . . Seven pounds? Whatm-I-bid?"

Between the gate where Peter was leaning and the crowd around the auctioneer, a group of farmers stood talking: men in breeches and leggings and old raincoats. From the line of parked cars along the edge of the field, a sleek, black car detached itself and came rolling down the grass towards them. It was driven by a sun-tanned man in a smart corduroy cap. As the car passed the farmers, they stopped talking and waited. Then they nodded meaningly to one another. But if the man driving the car noticed, he did not show it. Swinging his car from the grass on to the cart track, he drew gently to a stop in front of the gate.

It was quite obvious that he wished to come through and go on his way to the farm. But Peter did not open the gate for him. Instead he stood aside, while the man got out of the car to do it himself. He was short and wore a suit of well-cut tweeds. It was Mr. Sankey—the "new man." He ignored Peter's obvious ill manners and smiled.

"Good morning," he said briskly. "How's the bidding going?"

"All right, I suppose," Peter mumbled.

"You'll be glad when it's over, I expect?"

Opening the gate, Mr. Sankey smiled again. But Peter still did not smile back. He watched

*Continued on page 29*

When Flora Robson attended a party in a London street, children and photographers flocked to her. Pretty young actresses stood by—ignored

# Flora Robson, ugly duckling who became a star

*by NORMAN PHILLIPS*

**She smiles at the thought that she is plain, though once it drove her off the stage. Now her friends say her face is her fortune—"like an Epstein sculpture"**

WHEN HE HEARD of a children's street party in the heart of London, an ambitious press agent decided to take advantage of the occasion. He rounded up some budding actresses and sent them off to be photographed entertaining the youngsters. "Flora Robson's the guest of honour," he told his protegées. "When it comes to pictures, she won't offer any competition to pretty girls like you."

The street was cordoned off, a piano was wheeled out on the pavement and Miss Robson arrived. She carried a monster cake, covered with meringue and crystal fruits, that had been baked in her own kitchen. Youngsters surrounded her, and Flora Robson, who neither needed nor sought the publicity, next day found pictures of herself in the newspapers. The pretty young actresses had been ignored.

With her angular five foot nine inch figure, plain face and prominent teeth, Flora Robson has developed her own personal magnetism during an unorthodox journey to stardom. "Flora," says Dame Sybil Thorndike, "has the beauty of an Epstein sculpture."

Once an ugly duckling who was forced to give up acting because of her appearance, Miss Robson is now one of the few British actors or actresses enjoying a ten-year film contract without option. Her work in the theatre has been recognized by the award of the C.B.E.

Although her fame rests on her portrayal of highly-charged, emotional characters, off-stage, Miss Robson, at fifty-two, looks and acts like the model of a favourite aunt. A fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, she runs her own garden in Buckinghamshire and learns patchwork quilting at the local Women's Institute.

On stage, typical Robson rôles include women who kill with poison, knife or gun, kidnap children, or turn pirate. Currently, as the leading lady in the play, *No Escape*, Miss Robson murders an ex-suitor and ends by committing suicide.

When *No Escape* opened its tour at Eastbourne, the cast rehearsed through the Sunday night until two in the morning. Director John Fernald then dismissed them until a final dress

rehearsal at one o'clock on Monday afternoon. Fernald himself was back in the theatre by half-past nine on Monday morning to supervise the lighting and stage setting.

"Flora turned up at ten," Fernald recalls. "Although the rehearsal was not until one, she had come to the theatre to see if there was anything she could do. Next thing I knew, she had gathered all the prop cups in the place, made coffee and served it to everyone. Then she collected the empty cups and washed them."

The only time that Flora Robson prefers seclusion is while studying a new part. To prepare for *Black Chiffon,* she moved into the Savoy Hotel and isolated herself for two weeks so that she could read her script. In preference to a room with a river view that might distract her, she chose one overlooking a well in the centre of the building. Meals were served in her room. No letters or newspapers were delivered and she gave strict orders that no telephone calls were to be put through.

Careful study of her parts helps Miss Robson to cope with emergencies. In one of her rare romantic rôles, she had to kill Robert Donat. At the crucial moment, she pulled the trigger of her pistol. Instead of the flash of exploding gunpowder, there was only a click.

Undismayed by the misfire that threatened to ruin the play's climax, Miss Robson reached into her costume, drew out a long knife and "stabbed" Donat in the heart. Arming herself with the dagger as well as a pistol was her own idea.

"It was only to be expected that I should think that one out," she says. "Guns are so very temperamental."

## She Tripped And Fell On Stage

Despite all her precautions, a mishap which haunts her is falling on her face on stage. At the Old Vic, while appearing in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard,* Flora Robson tripped and fell flat. She recovered and picked herself up as if the fall had been intentional. Later, a member of the audience congratulated her on her technique of falling. "You do it so well," he said, "and it looks so Russian."

According to John Fernald, the secret of Miss Robson's acting is that "when you watch Flora you can't see how it's done. You never see her calculating how to achieve an effect."

In fact, Miss Robson conceals some shrewdly calculated techniques. In *Black Chiffon,* she reached a dramatic climax by deliberately imagining night after night that her father was watching her. In another scene, she insisted that red roses should be placed on the set because they helped her to portray a certain emotion.

Another Robson method saved Susan Shentall, the untrained girl who plays the lead in the film version of *Romeo And Juliet.* While filming and refilming the scene in which she learns that Romeo has killed Tybalt, Susan's tear ducts dried up. Miss Robson, who plays Juliet's nurse, drew the girl aside and began telling her a story. Before she had finished, tears were streaming down the cheeks of both women. Flora signalled the director and Susan stepped back in front of the camera.

Later, Miss Robson explained in her matter-of-fact way how she produces tears. "I think of the story of unhappy love that lies behind the old ballad 'Loch Lomond.' It's a story my father told me and it always makes me weep."

## Father Encouraged Her To Act

Flora's father, the late David Robson, combined professional skill as a marine surveyor with strong artistic impulses. Each of his six daughters was taught one of the arts.

"Flora," he announced when she was five, "*you* are going to be an actress."

Before Flora could read, her father taught her to memorize her lines. He arranged extra coaching, acted as his daughter's prompter at amateur performances and encouraged her during her student days when, because of her height and slender figure, she was usually in male rôles.

After graduating from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art with the bronze medal, Flora acted in repertory with the Ben Greet company and then went to the Oxford Playhouse. When she was twenty-four, she was replaced at Oxford by the beautiful Elissa Landi. "You'll get on in the theatre later on," Flora was told. "A young person must be pretty."

The verdict decided Flora to abandon the stage. She went to work in a factory at Welwyn Garden City as a receptionist, guide and welfare officer. Factory work failed to dim her yearning for the stage and she persuaded the management to install a well-equipped theatre and finance an amateur dramatic society.

"At the factory," Flora recalls, "I gained a knowledge of people, learned something about producing, and when the chance came to go back on the stage, I wasn't afraid of anything."

## Success Came—At £3 A Week

The chance came after four years in the factory. Returning to the theatre meant giving up £6 a week and a pension at sixty for an unpredictable future. About a year later, when she became an overnight success in *Desire Under The Elms,* Flora's income was £3 a week. Of this, thirty shillings paid for her room and board in a flat belonging to another struggling young actor, Robert Donat, and his wife.

At first, success seemed empty. No new parts were offered and no agents came to see her. "I was almost prepared," Flora says, "to redden my nose and go into pantomime."

One Sunday night, Dame Sybil Thorndike and her husband, Sir Lewis Casson, went to see *Desire Under The Elms.* "Where did you learn to act?" demanded Dame Sybil. Flora gave them a history of her career and told them, "I can't get any further."

"We'll send someone along to see you," promised Dame Sybil.

With the same tactics that Miss Robson herself now uses on behalf of newcomers, the Cassons spread the word that a new and startling actress had arrived. Not long afterwards a famous producer was telling her, "Damn it all, Flora, your face is your fortune."

Sitting in a cinema one afternoon, watching herself as Empress Elizabeth in *Catherine The Great,* Miss Robson heard two women commenting on her appearance. "Isn't she ugly?" asked one. "Those teeth!" said the other.

Flora Robson smiled to herself. She no longer worries about what she calls, "my funny face, my unmanageable hair and my undramatic ordinariness."

## Was Guide To The Queen Mother

When she is not on tour or making films abroad, Miss Robson travels between her house at Chalfont St. Peter, Buckinghamshire, the theatre and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. She is past president of the academy's council and frequently lectures to students.

A few months ago, when the Queen Mother visited the academy, Miss Robson acted as her guide. They paused in one class to listen to a Canadian girl declaiming a piece of her own choice. The instructor commended the pupil's selection but criticized her delivery. "You buttered it up too much," said the teacher.

The Queen Mother turned to Flora and almost imperceptibly raised an eyebrow. Miss Robson nodded agreement. "The Queen Mother and I are both Scots," she explained later. "We like a little butter and I was very pleased when the Queen Mother told the girl so."

Thirty-three years ago, Miss Robson had been a hopeful student there herself, playing Tybalt in *Romeo And Juliet* and trying to believe what the principal, Sir Kenneth Barnes, told her—that where there is talent looks are overlooked.

"If she'd been just a pretty," says Robert Donat, "Flora would never have got anywhere."

THE END

During the filming of *Romeo and Juliet* recently, Flora Robson (the Nurse) helped Susan Shentall, who plays Juliet, to cry to order

Flora Robson, with Noel Hood, in her latest play, *No Escape.* When Miss Robson was five, her father said: "Flora is to be an actress"

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P.909A

*Part 4 of Christy Brown's moving autobiography: MY LEFT FOOT*

# My doctors offer me new hope – at a price

**One thing worked in my useless body—my left foot. It was both my "hands" and "voice." Now, I learned, it was robbing me of a chance of becoming cured**

A STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL miracle—that's what it seemed when I was told that I might be cured. Two weeks before, I had made a pilgrimage to Lourdes, full of hope, even confidence, that my affliction would be cured. I had returned deeply disappointed. Now, only a week after coming back to my Dublin home, a doctor had called to tell me of a new treatment.

For sixteen years, ever since my birth in 1932, I had suffered from cerebral palsy. I was so crippled that I was unable to make co-ordinated movement of any kind. I could not walk, use my hands or speak, except in a queer grunting language of my own. The one thing that worked in my body was my left foot. It had become both my "hands" and "voice." With a paintbrush or pencil gripped between my toes, I had learned to paint and to write, and so to express my thoughts and communicate with other people. Now, it seemed, there was a chance that one day I might live like a normal person.

The man who brought me this momentous news was Dr. Robert Collis. There was to be no time wasted in beginning the treatment. "We'll start tomorrow," he had said. As he had not yet set up a special clinic of his own, I would be treated at home. He would send one of his assistants to examine me and devise a special line of treatment.

### Name To Remember Always

The doctor who came out next day to examine me was a young man, tall, handsome, with a certain military bearing that impressed even while it subdued me a little. He was slow and deliberate in his movements and his whole manner suggested an easy confidence that communicated itself to those about him. I felt myself liking him at once. His name was Louis Warnants, a name which I shall always remember with gratitude and affection.

Dr. Warnants drew up a treatment that consisted mostly of certain physical exercises which I could carry out myself at home, with perhaps a little help from the family if I wanted it. This, he told me, was only a preliminary test. If he saw that I was responding, no matter how slightly, he would then put me to a much harder routine of exercises which would become more involved and intricate as I got on. I found out that the exercises were called physiotherapy.

After that, Dr. Warnants came to me once a

**"The house that Mother built." At the window (left) of his little home-made house, Christy Brown watches his brother Sean tend the garden**

**Christy in his room with Peter. Building it was Mother's idea. Father objected—till he saw her on her knees, laying the bricks without a foundation**

week—every Sunday in fact. Each time he came he made me go through the exercises while he looked on, taking careful note of the ones I found most difficult to do and pointing out to me where I went wrong.

It was rather funny the way everyone at home used to rush about and fall over themselves every Sunday afternoon when the hour approached for Dr. Warnants to come. I think they were all a little in awe of him, for although he was a very nice gentleman and his manners impeccable, there were no half measures about him; he took his job seriously.

One Sunday afternoon when he came to treat me a little earlier than usual, the kitchen was full with all my sisters and brothers, both big and small. In next to no time, Mother got rid of the younger ones by rushing them all upstairs, but then didn't quite know what to do with the older ones. Dr. Warnants solved the problem.

"Good afternoon, everyone," he said politely, looking around at the six or seven that were still left. "You've got rid of all the lambs, Mrs. Brown, I see. But the sheep are still left."

Then he went over to where Jim was sitting. "Hallo, you're Jim, aren't you?" he said genially. "It's a topping day for a walk. Allow me to help you on with your coat." The others took the hint and departed in perfect good humour.

It was very difficult for Dr. Warnants to treat me in the house because the only room available was the kitchen itself, and that was much too small and awkward. During exercises, when I stretched out my leg, it would bang against the fire-grate, and when I turned round on my stomach my head would be under a chair and my legs beneath the table, so that each time I lifted my head I'd get a resounding smack on it.

"Either you're too big, Christy, or this room's too small," Dr. Warnants said.

"I think it's a mixture of both, doctor," Mother replied.

"If only we had a little more space," said Dr. Warnants with a sigh, as I banged my head again for the third or fourth time that afternoon.

### Mother Has A Brainwave

At the back of the house there was a good bit of waste ground which everybody at home had tried to cultivate, but in vain. True, they had actually succeeded in planting and raising cabbage and turnips there once in a while, but they all seemed to wither and die after a time. It seemed to want to remain a wilderness.

But Mother was determined that it would not. Frequently she offered half a crown to any one of us who'd make the best attempt to do something with it. Now, however, she had a brainwave. Why not make use of the back garden in another way? It would help both Dr. Warnants and myself greatly if we had a room to ourselves away from the noise and disturbance of the house. So, Mother thought, why not build that room on the ground at the back where we'd be away from everything?

Ah, but the money—there's always the question of money! She hadn't an idea what it would cost, but as she lived in a family of bricklayers she was slowly able to estimate what the cost of the building materials would be by making unobtrusive little inquiries among Father and the boys. She found it would be £50—an enormous sum for her to find.

Still, she would not let this defeat her. She plunged straightway into the thing—borrowing, selling, joining money clubs, visiting the good old pawnshop, looking up some well-to-do old uncles and aunts, after discovering they weren't dead after all. For weeks she carried on this secret cash-gathering, unknown to any of the family except me.

When she had found about £20 she decided to make a start. She knew it was useless putting the matter to Father, for he'd oppose it on the grounds that the "Authorities," a favourite

word of his, wouldn't allow it. But she put the idea to her four bricklayer sons. None of them was enthusiastic. They all would be willing enough if one would make a start, but, as usual in such cases, no one was ready to make such a start.

Mother was so made that she must always put her ideas to the test at once. She decided to take matters into her own hands. She went out one afternoon and ordered a hundred concrete blocks, four bags of cement, and sand. "For a start," she said!

The materials arrived the same day. Poor Father almost collapsed when he came home from work that evening and saw all the blocks piled up neatly in the front garden. He held on to the gate, his mouth opened, but he didn't seem to be able to speak as he gazed at the pile. He moved slowly up the front walk, opened the door and said in a sort of hoarse whisper to Mother: "What's the idea?"

### "Over My Dead Body"

"Oh, I forgot to tell you," said Mother casually as she put his dinner on the table. "I'm going to build a house for Christy in the back garden."

"My God!" said Father, staring at her. "Do you want us all to be evicted? Do you realize what you're doing? The Authorities will——"

"Yes, yes, I know all that," Mother interrupted quietly. "But do take your dinner now, like a good man, or it'll be cold on you."

"Only over my dead body," Father said, his mouth full of stew.

"I'd bury your body first, of course," Mother replied ever so meekly.

Seeing that it was useless to argue, Father next resorted to a plan of non-co-operation, saying that he wouldn't set one block and that he'd advise the four other bricklayers in the house to have nothing to do with the business either. For a moment, I thought Mother was beaten. But she just smiled and said: "Very well, I'll build it myself."

They all laughed at that—the idea of a woman building a house!

Next day Mother rose particularly early, got breakfast ready very fast, sent the six younger children off to school and got through all the household work during the morning so that she could have the whole afternoon free. Lunchtime came and went as usual. Mother didn't say a word of what was in her head to anyone.

At about four o'clock that afternoon I suddenly noticed that she was spending a lot of time at the back of the house. Then I became aware of peculiar sounds coming from the back garden. Very curious, I managed to stumble to the pantry window. I looked out.

### The Proud Bricklayer

There was Mother, on her knees on the grass, a bucket of cement on one side of her and a jug of water on the other. She held a trowel in her right hand. She was looking proudly at the line of blocks she had already set out before her!

That evening, when she had served tea and dinner, she went quietly back to her work in the back garden. A few minutes later, Father, happening to go into the yard for something, saw her. He stood stock still, then slowly he approached the growing wall. He touched it with his foot.

"What's this?" he asked. "What do you think you're doing?"

Mother looked up. "I'm building Christy's house," she said, setting in another block.

Father said nothing for a minute or so, he just watched. Then he looked a bit closer. Then his hand went out; he pulled it back. He walked to the other end of the line of blocks. His upper lip twitched a bit; he paused. . . . At last he said: "Look-it! You're doing it all wrong, woman. Where's your foundation?"

"I knew I was forgetting something," Mother answered rather crossly.

By this time the other four bricklayers had

**The girl Christy met at the clinic where he receives his treatment. "Sheila was the best friend I could possibly have found," he writes**

come out and gathered round. "Look-it, boys," said Father, turning to them. "Your mother's trying to do *our* work!"

"Terrible," said Paddy, looking critically at the row of cement blocks. "You haven't even got them level, Mother!"

"That's women for you," said Peter, "always trying to be like men. Go back to your dishes, ma."

"Well, if it's a man's job, get on with it," she said. She just stood up and wiped her hands on her apron. Slowly she turned and left them. As she passed me she smiled.

The five bricklayers stood and looked at each other. "C'mon," said Father as Mother disappeared into the house. "Let's start."

So they built my little house in the back garden. The work went through many vicissitudes and it looked at one time as though it would never be finished. The thing that held us up most of all was money. Mother's £20 had been used up quickly and we seemed to come to a standstill.

Then Mother managed to scrape together another few pounds and the work was resumed again. They appointed me foreman, and from time to time I pointed out to them what way I'd like certain parts of it built and where I wanted the fireplace, the window and the door.

After some months the roof was put on and the ceiling backed up. Soon the actual building was finished. It only needed some bits of furniture now to make it alive. Piece by piece the furniture moved in—a divan, a bed, a few chairs and a table. Then my brother-in-law, a sawyer, made me a handsome little bureau in which to hold some odds and ends. The lino was put down, the wallpaper put up and the curtains hung. In a few days more the electric light was installed and the door and window-frames painted. It was ready to be lived in at last.

It was originally intended only to make a sort of exercise room of it, a gymnasium, where Dr. Warnants might treat me undisturbed. As time went on, however, I slowly converted it into both a living-room and study, where I ate, read, wrote and slept.

Thus at last I had really broken away from the family, from the noise and busy life of the house. Now at last I could live in comfortable solitude and paint and write as much as I liked in perfect freedom without the constant drumming of voices in my ears. In summer, I could sit by the open window and read, the only sound being the happy chorus of the birds in the trees outside, and when the winter came it was even more pleasant, for then I'd sit by the fire in the dark and watch the red glow dance on the walls and fall on the backs of books on the shelves, making their gilt lettering stand out in the gloom.

Meanwhile, my treatment went on under Dr. Warnants. We were able to make better headway now that we had more space to move in. It was still very crude, this treatment for cerebral palsy—as the causes of it were as yet essentially unknown and therefore the treatment of the complaint was still in the embryo stage.

### At The Crossroads . . .

Then one day Dr. Collis came and told me that he had decided to send me over to London to see his sister-in-law, Mrs. Eirene Collis, who was a well-known specialist in cerebral palsy. He wanted to get her opinion as to whether I was likely to respond to treatment before starting me on a full-scale rehabilitation programme. He would ask her to examine me in the Middlesex Hospital and give him her opinion on my chances of leading a normal life. I would travel to London by air in a few days' time, and Dr. Warnants, who had gone over ahead of me, would meet me at Northolt Airport and drive me to the hospital to see Mrs. Collis. Mother was to travel with me.

I realized then that everything depended on Mrs. Collis's verdict. If she decided I was too far advanced a case to benefit from treatment, then I would be back to where I was before Dr. Collis found me, back to the old life of inactivity and hopelessness again. If, on the other hand, she should conclude that I would respond favourably to treatment, then my life would have some meaning, some ultimate worth and value. Then I could begin to break down some of the walls that stood between me and a normal life.

I was at the crossroads.

It was January, 1949, the start of the new year, when I made the flight to London with Mother to see Mrs. Collis for her verdict. We stayed just one day. That was all. Yet even in the space of a few hours my entire life was changed.

We all expected Mother to be excited, and indeed a little nervous, for this was to be her first air trip. But we didn't know her half enough at all. She took the prospect of flying quite calmly. "Might as well die in the air as on the ground," she summed it up.

Next day she went and bought a new hat. "This is for London," she announced, trying it on before the mirror. "Do you like it?"

Father looked at it from right angles, left angles and a host of other angles, paused, looked very critical, paused again, scratched his head and spoke. "Hmmm. . . not bad, mind you, very—er—artistic. But, tell me, what's it supposed to be?"

### Taxi Ride Through London

In spite of this, Mother wore her new hat the day we flew to London, and smiled triumphantly when Dr. Collis told her he liked it.

We arrived at Northolt at eleven o'clock on a bright, cold Saturday morning. Dr. Warnants was there to meet us and hoisted me across his shoulder and into a waiting taxi. I didn't like this mode of travelling on a person's back, for I thought it rather undignified and it made me feel foolish. I would much rather have crawled to the taxi.

We set out on the drive to the Middlesex Hospital. I looked out of the window as the car wound its way through the London traffic, seeing the big jostling crowds outside the huge

*Continued on page 41*

# THE LIGHTS OF BRIA

*by* ***LEIGH VANCE***

**The lights—and safety—were somewhere far below. They had five minutes' fuel; three frightened passengers; only one parachute . . .**

BEHIND HIM, Mac could hear the parachute buckles scraping the metal wall of the cockpit. Every now and again, as the plane sagged into a down draught, the whole 'chute would swing out and then slap back again with a tinny thud, drumming itself into his brain.

One 'chute. One 'chute between five people. Himself, Jim and three passengers—a crazy old prospector called McKay and a couple of Pedros. Or you might call it six. The woman was due to have a baby about yesterday.

He stole a look at the gauge. The needle was flickering over the empty mark. That meant only nine or ten minutes' flying time left. And if they hadn't spotted the lights of Bria by then, it was the end for all of them. Except the one who got the 'chute.

He felt a wing dip and jerked his eyes back to the panel. He wished he didn't hate instrument flying so much. And this wasn't just the ordinary night flight. For forty minutes they'd been stooging in circles, praying for the ten-tenths cloud masking the valley below to break and give them a sight of the lights of Bria.

All around them were the peaks, rearing up eight or nine thousand feet. So far, he reckoned, it was only chance that they hadn't smashed into the side of a cliff. There was no way of telling exactly where they were. The company didn't run to radio in the old planes they used to hop around the hills—and even if they had, Bria wasn't equipped to handle that class of traffic.

He thought about Marion, waiting for him somewhere below. She might even be able to hear his engines. . . .

He thought of the lone 'chute behind him. It would be easy enough to hand over to Jim beside him in the other seat, make some excuse to the passengers, and jump himself. That would be one way of making sure he saw Marion again. But he doubted if she'd want to see him very much when she heard the truth.

The gauge needle was in a frenzy. Only about seven minutes left now. He would have to give that 'chute to someone soon or it would be too late. The woman was the obvious choice. It was her first baby; but the dark, troubled eyes turning always to her husband told their own story. She would never leave her husband. And the husband wouldn't jump without his wife, that was certain.

McKay must be around seventy. He was half crazy from panning in the hills by himself for forty years, all burned up by his dream of wealth. He wouldn't miss what was left of his life.

That left only Jim. The skipper lifted his eyes from the panel and studied the lean profile beside him in the second pilot's seat. Jim had plenty to live for all right. A wife, three kids. But Jim wouldn't jump with the woman aboard.

He slapped his hand down on the release and broke the catch of his safety belt. "You take her," he said, rubbing a hand over his eyes. "I'm dizzy from watching that damned dial."

Jim gave him a long, slow look. "How much fuel d'you reckon we've got now, Mac?" he said, flexing his feet on the bar.

UNHOOKING the 'chute from its peg, the skipper said: "Six minutes, maybe. I'm going to give this to the woman."

"One thing I know," Jim said, his eyes on the artificial horizon. "If we ever get out of this alive, the first thing I'm going to do is to have a Turkish bath to iron the knots out of my neck. Coming along?"

Mac swung the 'chute over his shoulder and opened the communicating door. "Thanks. But I'm doing all the sweating I ever want to do right now."

He stepped into the cabin and shut the door behind him. After the roar of the cockpit it seemed as quiet as death in there. McKay was sprawled out in his seat with his hands over his stomach. Behind him, the woman was asleep with her head on her husband's shoulder. The man was stroking her forehead with his hand.

McKay looked up. He was a stringy, sandy-haired little man with bright, pebble-sized blue eyes which held a wild look.

"Are we there?" he said, shifting in his seat.

"Not yet."

Mac leaned against the door and dropped the 'chute to the deck. He was wondering how to do it. He didn't want to scare them more than he had to. But he had to get the woman out within a couple of minutes or it might be too late.

HE lit a cigarette and studied them carefully through the smoke. The woman had woken and was patting her hair. She looked sick and strained. Her husband was sitting up, looking at him expectantly.

He dropped the match to the floor and trod on it. "Can I have your attention, please," he said. "I'm afraid we're in a little trouble."

McKay said: "Trouble? What kind of trouble?"

"For the last forty minutes we've been circling the valley waiting for the cloud to break long enough for us to see the lights of Bria. Unless we're over the town, it's not safe to go down. Now we're running out of fuel."

The woman gave a low cry. No one spoke for a moment. Then McKay said: "How much longer have we got?"

They all leaned forward, waiting for his answer.

"About five minutes," he said. "At the most."

"And then?"

"And then we go down whether we like it or not."

"Wouldn't it be better to go down now while you've still got power?"

That was something he'd been banging about in his mind for the past half-hour. But in his experience it was fatal to go down through

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

The pilot said quietly: "I'm afraid we're in a little trouble . . . we're running out of fuel." The woman gave a low cry. For a moment no one spoke

cloud unless you were absolutely certain where you were.

"Not in my opinion," he said. "Bria is in a valley. It's surrounded by foothills. Beyond them the mountains go up another eight or nine thousand feet. We have no way of telling whether we're over the valley itself or the hills. Either way, if the cloud is at ground level, we'd hit something going down."

The plane lurched for a moment and he braced himself against the door. He lifted the 'chute off the deck and went towards the couple. He spoke to the man. "We'd better get your wife into this now," he said. "If we don't see the lights before the tanks run dry, she can jump. That way, she at least would be safe."

McKay gripped his arm as he passed. "You mean that is the only parachute you've got in the plane?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Why are there not enough for everyone? What right have you to endanger the lives of your passengers in this way?"

Mac looked down at him. Fear had taken the colour out of the old man's face. Under his ragged moustache his teeth were chipped and stained like an animal's.

"Civil aircraft don't have to carry parachutes," Mac said wearily. "This 'chute is my personal property."

He motioned to the woman. "Come on. We haven't much time."

She hesitated, looking at her husband. "I do not wish the parachute, señor," she said. "I do not wish to leave my husband."

The man put his hand over hers. "Mariana —there is the baby."

She shook her head. "If there is to be a choice between dying with you and living with a baby I do not even know yet—I stay with you."

The man spread his hands. "You see how it is, señor?"

"All right. Have it your own way. But, in case she changes her mind at the last minute, let's get this thing on anyway. There won't be any time for doing up buckles once we start going down."

As he bent to pull her up, he heard the rasp

*Continued on page 31*

# Flying Christine races death

*by DON EVERITT*

**Reg Blanchford's floating ambulance speeds to the rescue. He launched it with a millionaire's backing—and a one-man crusade**

From St. Peter Port, the Flying Christine sets off to answer a call. Her first mercy trip proved that she was well able to ride rough seas

IN the late afternoon of August 9, 1952, the rising tide at Moulin Huet Bay, on the south coast of Guernsey, trapped and threatened to drown two girls of twelve playing on Little Cradle Rock. In a fierce gale, the Flying Christine—the high-speed marine ambulance of the St. John Ambulance Brigade—which operates an island rescue service, put to sea from its headquarters at St. Peter Port.

People on the cliffs watched the ambulance disappear repeatedly under twenty-foot Atlantic rollers. Meanwhile, from the shore, two men and a girl reached the children. But one man collapsed, and the other, after helping the girl to save the children, went back to the rock and stayed with him. The sea crept over their feet and up to their necks. Soon, only a small pinnacle and two heads showed above the wave crests.

Twice the sea swept away the tired man, and each time his companion dragged him back. With high seas running, nothing could be done from the beach to save them.

### Balanced On Slippery Deck

Then the Flying Christine appeared. The coxswain steered her through clusters of uncharted submerged rocks right up to the two heads. Reg Blanchford, the officer in command, and one of his crew balanced on the slippery, bucking deck and threw a lifebelt on a line. The cox deftly held the launch steady as the wind and tide tried to throw her against the rock. Within five minutes Blanchford and his helper hauled the men aboard. Two minutes later, Little Cradle Rock had disappeared.

Blanchford was one of five people who received bravery awards for the rescue. A man with bronzed, youthful features and a shock of prematurely grey hair, he got the M.B.E.; but to him, as the ambulance brigade's transport area commissioner, the greater reward lay in the rescue itself. Less than three weeks before, the Flying Christine had been launched as the world's first high-speed marine ambulance, after months of wrangling and criticism from the island's officials and administrators.

"They called the Christine unnecessary and unseaworthy," says Blanchford, who has the nose of a boxer and the gentle, appealing voice of a clergyman. "This rescue proved them wrong. She had withstood a terrible sea and rescued two men who could not otherwise have been saved. No one has criticized her since."

The thirty-seven foot six inch former R.A.F. seaplane tender and the ambulance men and coxswains who man her serve a widespread population. Last year, the ambulance answered eleven medical and ten accident calls along the Guernsey coast and on the nearby smaller islands of Sark, Herm, Jethou and Brechou. On nearly every occasion the launch's speed proved a vital, if not life-saving, factor.

### Young Housemaid Was Gassed

On one October afternoon, Blanchford got a call to Brechou (population twenty-six), seven miles from Guernsey, where a young German housemaid had been accidentally gassed. With three St. John men, Blanchford arrived to find that a kitchen gas pipe had become disconnected. The fumes had quickly overcome the girl and she showed no sign of life. The ambulance men worked to revive her, and after half an hour her breathing stabilized

"But for the Christine's twenty-two knots," says Blanchford, "the patient would have died before we reached her."

Sometimes the limitations and the antiquity of the life on the smaller islands hinder Blanchford's professional desire for speed. At Sark

Blanchford (second from right) helps to lift a cliff accident victim from a dinghy to the Christine. The launch is on call at any hour, day or night

In the Flying Christine's dinghy, ambulance men carry out a rescue from a rock. For such a rescue in 1952, Blanchford won an M.B.E.

(population 563), which prohibits motor cars, a heavy horse-drawn ambulance takes patients to the quayside. On other islands, tractor-drawn trailers sometimes have to carry the stretcher cases. One freezing January day at Herm (population thirty-six), Blanchford and a stretcher party had to carry a mother with post-natal complications and her three weeks old daughter half a mile down the steep track to the tiny quay.

Blanchford operates the Flying Christine round the clock and in most weathers. At a moment's notice he can muster a crew from the duty men at the brigade's transport headquarters, and he has a panel of highly experienced local boatmen and pilots who act voluntarily as coxswains. "Their skill has prevented more than one tragedy."

### Woman Lay In Intense Pain

Thick fog one day prevented a steamer from leaving Sark with an expectant mother among its passengers. A call to the St. John Ambulance headquarters reported her "in intense pain."

Blanchford picked up a nurse, a doctor and three of his most experienced coxswains and, within fifteen minutes, had the ambulance out of St. Peter Port harbour. Detecting rocks from the sound of the waves, the three boatmen took the Flying Christine safely across the seven miles to Sark in fifty minutes. Fifty minutes later the ambulance men lifted the woman ashore at Guernsey and took her to hospital.

Apart from their inter-island work, the Flying Christine crew have made several coastal rescues since July, 1952. On an August day last year, a sixteen year old Leicester boy tried to climb a hundred-foot cliff rising almost sheer from the beach. Twenty-five feet from the top he lost his nerve. A motor ambulance crew radioed to the brigade headquarters that they could not reach the boy from the clifftop because the crumbling rock would crash on to him.

Soon afterwards, ambulance men were rowing to the beach in the Flying Christine's rubber dinghy. Blanchford scaled the cliff and found the boy terrified, standing on footholds barely three inches wide. He had been in that position for nearly an hour. The St. John officer held his feet and encouraged him.

Above them, the motor ambulance men laid sacking on the edge of the cliff and passed down a safety jacket on a rope. The men on the beach directed their colleagues by walkie-talkie radio. At the first attempt, the jacket missed Blanchford's outstretched hand by inches, and small rocks tumbled about the man and boy. The second time, the jacket came down accurately. Blanchford slipped it over the boy's shoulders and then guided him over footholds and handholds to the beach.

With the Flying Christine, Guernsey today has probably the finest ambulance service in the world. This is the measure of success of a one-man crusade which began with a road accident on the island twenty-four years ago.

One afternoon, as young Reginald Herbert Blanchford motor-cycled home after seeing his girl, a car crashed into him and drove on. Unconscious and bleeding, he lay in the road with severe injuries. Some time elapsed before one of the island's two ill-equipped ambulances, manned by untrained volunteers, picked him up.

Then, at the impressionable and idealistic age of fifteen, Blanchford decided in hospital to devote his life to providing Guernsey with an unparalleled ambulance service. When he came out of hospital two years later, he sacrificed a place in the family cement business, shelved youthful ideas of marriage, and persuaded his father to give him his keep and £2 a week indefinitely and sell him a van for £100. The van he converted into an ambulance.

### A Request From Parliament

At the same time, Blanchford began training as a physiotherapist and joined the St. John Ambulance brigade, first as a volunteer and later as a full-time member of the transport staff. The transport department grew on the old site of the Blanchford cement works, which the brigade had bought at a bargain price.

After the war, Blanchford reorganized the transport department. Soon afterwards, at the request of Guernsey's Parliament, the brigade took over the island's official ambulance service. In 1948, Blanchford first suggested that the island should run its own marine ambulance.

Three years of official and unofficial argument passed. Blanchford grew impatient as he saw countless cases calling for fast seaborne medical aid. One incident in particular lent weight to his argument.

On an August afternoon in 1950, a German freighter, thirty-three miles north of Guernsey, radioed that a boiler explosion had severely burned three of her crew. St. Peter Port lifeboat went out with a doctor on board, and a motor ambulance was called to stand by at the harbour mouth. But the arrangement did not satisfy Blanchford.

He chartered a speedboat, took a doctor with him, and overtook the nine-knot lifeboat before it had cleared the coast. Blanchford took on board the other doctor from the lifeboat and sped on towards a Dutch ship to which the injured men had been transferred.

Forty-five minutes later, when the lifeboat arrived, the doctors had the men comfortable. The lifeboat took them to hospital.

### He Bought The Boat Himself

When he decided he could wait no longer for official backing, Blanchford tried other means of getting a marine ambulance. He wrote to a millionaire who lives on the island, asked for £1,000, and got it. The rest of the money came in steadily, and Blanchford bought the Christine. After the launching, the millionaire gave another £1,000, towards the running costs.

Blanchford still retains the almost fanatical dedication to the task he set himself twenty-four years ago. No facet of the service escapes his attention. Off-duty in his bungalow at the ambulance station—during the war he married the girl who had waited for him since his accident—he carries the telephone from room to room.

His enthusiasm inspires his staff. Both the paid and voluntary members have worked thousands of spare time hours to save and make money for the ambulance service.

"The chief," says one of Blanchford's men, "will never ask you to do something that he couldn't do himself."

Some time ago, Blanchford badly needed a rest. Worry and overwork had made him ill. He took a week's holiday and one day went with his wife to Guernsey's beautiful Petit Bot Bay. Sunning himself in a deck chair on the beach, he saw a boy climbing a crumbling cliff. He felt he could not face another cliff rescue, and started to leave the beach.

"If he gets in trouble," he told his wife, "someone can send for the men at headquarters." But then the boy called out. An hour later, Blanchford had performed another rescue. THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

# DESTINATION UNKNOWN

## *by AGATHA CHRISTIE*

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

Hilary and the scientists were held here: Jessop was sure of it. Yet to search he needed proof. And there was none

FOR TWO WEEKS Hilary Craven had been in a fantastic world—living among a secret community of scientists, hidden in a research unit in the Moroccan hinterland. And, against that incredible background, she had fallen in love. . . .

His name was Andy Peters, a young American. Like the others, he had been lured there by the idea of creating a world government, a "Pax Scientifica"—but now he hated the place and planned to escape. Hilary hoped to escape with him, hoped to explain to him one day that she was not Olive Betterton, a scientist's wife, as everyone believed. . . .

Her masquerade had begun in Casablanca, where she had been trying to escape a bitter past. She had been on the verge of suicide when Jessop, a British security agent, talked her into impersonating Mrs. Betterton. He had been trailing the real Mrs. Betterton, hoping she would lead him to her missing husband—an atomic physicist—when she was fatally injured in a plane crash.

Hilary had gone to Fez as Mrs. Betterton and then had taken a plane to Marrakesh. The plane had landed in the desert, and its passengers transferred to a car. To hide the switchover, corpses were loaded into the plane and it was set on fire. As they left the scene of the faked crash, Hilary had managed to leave a trail of pearls from a broken necklace.

Surprisingly, Tom Betterton had not given her away when she arrived—he was hoping to escape himself. Hilary told him that before his wife died she had murmured: "Boris—dangerous." Tom thought she meant Boris Glydr, cousin of his first wife, Elsa, who had died shortly before his discovery of ZE Fission made him famous.

That night, as Hilary was going to bed, a Moorish servant drew her aside—the "Master" wished to see her. Who was the "Master," Hilary wondered? Puzzled, and rather frightened, she was taken to a room of almost Oriental magnificence.

There, she found herself facing the smiling eyes of M. Aristides, the legendary financier she had met in Fez.

### FINAL INSTALMENT

*The Aristides Plan*

MONSIEUR ARISTIDES waved a small, claw-like hand. "*Asseyez-vous, chère madame,*" he said. Hilary came forward in a dream and sat down upon another low divan opposite him. He gave a gentle little cackle of laughter.

"You are surprised," he said. "It is not what you expected, eh?"

"No, indeed it's not," said Hilary. "I never thought—I never for a moment imagined——"

M. Aristides, still chuckling, held up his hand. "I am a philanthropist, madame. As you know, I am rich, possibly the richest man in the world today. With my wealth I feel under the obligation to serve humanity. I have established here, in this remote spot, a colony of lepers and a vast assembly of research into the problem of the cure of leprosy." He smiled. "A 'leper colony'—people will always give such a place a wide berth."

"You established it for that reason?" asked Hilary.

"Yes. But we have here also a cancer research department, and important work is being done on tuberculosis. There is virus research, also—for curative reasons, *bien entendu*: biological warfare is not mentioned."

"But why?" demanded Hilary. "Why have you done all this?"

"I am a business man," said M. Aristides simply. "I am also a collector. When wealth becomes oppressive, that is the only thing to do. I have collected many things in my time. Now that I am an old man, madame, there was not very much more for me to collect. So I came at last to collecting brains."

"*Brains?*"

HE nodded gently. "Yes, it is the most interesting thing of all to collect. Little by little, madame, I am assembling here all the brains of the world. The *young* men, those are the ones I am bringing here. Young men of promise, young men of achievement. One day the tired nations of the world will wake up and realize that their scientists are old and stale, and that the young brains of the world—the doctors, the research chemists, the physicists, the surgeons—are all here in my keeping. And if they want a scientist, or a plastic surgeon, or a biologist, they will have to come and buy him from *me*!"

"You mean. . . ." Hilary leaned forward, staring at him. "You mean that this is all a gigantic financial operation?"

"Naturally. Otherwise—it would not make sense, would it?"

Hilary gave a deep sigh. "No," she said. "That's just what I've felt."

"After all, you see," said M. Aristides almost apologetically, "it is my profession. I am a financier."

"But how do you get all these people to come here?"

"I buy them, madame. In the open market, like any other merchandise. Sometimes, I buy them with money. More often, I buy them with ideas. Young men are dreamers. They have ideals. They have beliefs. Sometimes, I buy them with safety—those that have transgressed the law." He added: "You are intelligent, madame. I saw that at once when we met at the hotel in Fez." He gave another little cackle of laughter. "You did not know it, madame, but I had you brought to Fez in order that I might observe you."

**Without warning, the Moroccan stepped forwar**

"I see," said Hilary. She noted the Oriental phrasing of the sentence.

"I was pleased to think that you would be coming here. For, if you understand me, I do not find many intelligent people in this place to talk to." He made a gesture. "These scientists—they are geniuses perhaps at what they *do*, but they are uninteresting people with whom to converse. Their wives," he added thoughtfully, "are usually very dull, too. We do not encourage wives here. I permit wives to come for only one reason."

"What reason?"

M. Aristides said dryly: "In the rare cases where a husband is unable to do his work properly because he is thinking too much of his wife. That seemed to be the case with your husband, Thomas Betterton. Thomas Betterton is known to the world as a young man of genius, but since he has been here with us he has

nd spoke. Dr. Van Heidem slewed round in his chair, and the entire company gazed at the man in astonishment. His voice was unmistakably American

done only mediocre and second-class work."

"But don't you find that constantly happening? These people are, after all, in prison here. Surely they rebel?"

"At first, perhaps," M. Aristides agreed. "That is only natural. It is so when you first cage a bird. But if the bird is in a big enough aviary, if it has all that it needs, it forgets in the end that it was ever free."

Hilary shivered a little. "You frighten me," she said. "You really frighten me."

"You will grow to understand many things here, madame. Let me assure you that though all these men of different ideologies arrive here, and are disillusioned and rebellious, they will all toe the line in the end."

She looked at him with something like horror. "It's dreadful," she said. "It's like a typists' pool! You've got a pool here of brains."

"Exactly. You put it very justly, madame."

"And from this pool you intend, one day, to supply scientists to whoever pays you best for them?"

"That is, roughly, the general principle, madame."

"But once your scientist is in the free world again he could refuse to work for his new employer. He would be free again."

"True up to a point," said M. Aristides. "There may have to be a certain—conditioning, shall we say?"

"Conditioning—what do you mean by that?" Hilary asked.

"You have heard of leucotomy, madame?"

Hilary frowned. "That's a brain operation, isn't it?"

"But yes. It was devised originally for the curing of melancholia. After the operation, the patient has no more desire to commit suicide, no further feelings of guilt. He is carefree, conscienceless and, in most cases, obedient. We have made great strides in the investigation of the subject. It seems possible that we may in the end so condition a human being that while his powers of intellect remain unimpaired, he will exhibit perfect docility. Any suggestion made to him he will accept."

"But that's horrible," cried Hilary. "Horrible! And I don't believe it would work. I do not believe a contented, suggestible *animal* could ever produce creative work of real brilliance."

M. Aristides shrugged his shoulders. "Perhaps. You are intelligent. . . . But experiments are going on in our laboratories all the time."

"Experiments! On human beings, do you mean?"

"But certainly. That is the only practical method."

"But—which human beings?"

"There are always the misfits," said M. Aristides, "the ones who do not adapt themselves to life here, who will not co-operate. They make good experimental material."

Hilary dug her fingers into the cushions of the divan. She felt a deep horror of this smiling, yellow-faced little man. Everything he said was so reasonable, so logical and so businesslike, that it made the horror worse. Here was no raving madman, just a man to whom his fellow creatures were so much raw material.

"Don't you believe in God?" she said.

"Naturally I believe in God." M. Aristides raised his eyebrows. His tone was almost shocked. "God has blessed me with supreme power. With money and opportunity."

"Do you read your Bible?" asked Hilary. "Do you remember what Moses said to Pharaoh. *Let my people go.*"

He smiled. "So—I am Pharaoh?—And you

"Don't call me Olive," she said. "My name's Hilary. Hilary Craven." Andy spoke softly: "Hilary . . . I'll have to get used to it"

are Moses? Is that what you are saying to me, madame? To let these people go, all of them, or just—one special case?"

"I'd like to say—all of them," said Hilary.

"But it is really your husband for whom you plead?"

"He is no good to you," said Hilary. "Surely by now you must realize that."

"Perhaps it is true what you say, madame. Yes, I am very much disappointed in Thomas Betterton. I hoped that your presence here might restore him to his brilliance, but it seems to have had little or no effect."

"Then write him off as one of your failures. Let him return to the outer world."

"That would hardly do, madame. I am not yet prepared to have knowledge of this place broadcast to the globe." He leaned back and brought the tips of his yellow fingers together. "Of course, he might leave a hostage behind him, and that might tie his tongue."

"You mean?"

"I meant *you*, madame. . . . If Thomas Betterton went and you remained as a hostage, how would that bargain strike you? Would you be willing?"

Hilary stared past him into the shadows. If there was a chance, now, that Thomas Betterton might go free, while she remained, would not that be the best way to fulfil her mission? For she knew—as M. Aristides did not—that there would be no real hostage. She herself meant nothing to Thomas Betterton. The wife he had loved was already dead.

She raised her head and looked across at the little old man on the divan.

"I should be willing," she said.

ARISTIDES said: "You have courage, madame, and loyalty and devotion. They are good qualities. For the rest—" He smiled. "We will talk of it again some other time."

"Oh no, no!" Hilary suddenly buried her face in her hands. Her shoulders shook. "I can't bear it! I can't bear it! It's all too inhuman."

"You must not mind so much, madame." The old man's voice was tender, almost soothing. "It has pleased me tonight to tell you my aims and my aspirations. You are horrified. You are repulsed. You speak with all the passion and the rebellion that go with red hair. My second wife," he added reflectively, "had red hair. She was a beautiful woman, and she loved me. Strange, is it not? I have always admired red-haired women." He sighed. "Alas! Women interest me very little nowadays—as women. It is the stimulus of mental companionship that I now prefer. Believe me, madame, your company has refreshed me greatly."

He got up and patted her gently on the shoulder. "You will settle down," he said, confidently. "Ah yes, the red-headed bird in the cage will settle down. In a year, in two years certainly, you will be very happy! Though possibly," he added thoughtfully, "less interesting."

The interview was over.

M. Aristides pressed a bell. The servant who had brought Hilary to him reappeared to take her back to her quarters. Thankfully, she escaped.

Her sleep was troubled that night, and in the small hours she awoke with a start. She raised herself on her elbow, listening, and looked across the room to the other bed.

"Tom, do you hear?"

"Yes. Aircraft—flying low. Nothing in that. They come over from time to time."

"I wondered——" She did not finish her sentence. She lay awake thinking, going over and over that strange interview with M. Aristides. The old man had got some kind of capricious liking for her. Could she play upon that? Could she in the end prevail upon him to take her with him, out into the world again?

What had she said to Tom? *"I'll find a way of getting out of here"*? Odd, if the way should prove to be M. Aristides. . . .

LEBLANC said: "A message. A message at last." His orderly had just entered and, after saluting, had laid a folded paper on the desk before him.

He unfolded it, then spoke excitedly. "This is a report from one of our reconnaissance pilots. When flying over a certain position in a mountainous region he observed a signal being flashed. It was in Morse and was twice repeated. Here it is." He laid the enclosure before Jessop.

C.O.G.L.E.P.R.O.S.I.E.S.L.

Leblanc separated off the last two letters with a pencil.

"SL—that is our code for 'Do not acknowledge,'" he said.

"And COG, with which the message starts," said Jessop, "is *our* recognition signal."

"Then the rest is the actual message." Leblanc underlined it. "LEPROSIE."

"Leprosy?" said Jessop.

Leblanc spread out a large map in front of him. He pointed with a stubby forefinger stained with nicotine.

"Here," he said, frowning, "there is a very famous medical research station, founded and endowed by well-known philanthropists. There is a leper settlement there of about two hundred people. There is also a cancer research station, and a tuberculosis sanatorium. But understand this, it is all of indisputable authenticity. Its reputation is of the highest. The President of the Republic himself is its patron."

"H'm," said Jessop thoughtfully.

"But it is open to inspection at any time. Medical men who are interested in these subjects visit there."

"And see nothing they ought not to see!" said Jessop. "Why should they? There is no better camouflage for dubious business than an atmosphere of the highest respectability."

He began to tap with his pencil excitedly. "A leper settlement seems to me very suggestive. . . . Idle curiosity does not bring people to a leper settlement, and behind such a façade of philanthropy and charity—anything might go

*Continued on page 32*

Muir sees a customer at his village headquarters. He often takes chances on books he knows nothing about—"I get a feeling I can sell them"

# Percy Muir gambles on treasures from the past

*by JOHN ENNIS*

**Dealing in rare books worth thousands of pounds, he may make a small fortune—or lose it overnight**

A FEW WEEKS ago Percy Muir, a dealer in rare books, visited a private house where he was shown an old manuscript. He knew nothing of its value, but he offered to buy it for £500. "I'm sticking my neck out a mile," he told the owner. "If you like, I'll go away and find out what it is really worth. It might be one thousand pounds or it might be only two hundred and fifty pounds."

The owner refused the offer of £500, and asked him to find out the real value of the manuscript. "So far," says Muir, "my researches suggest that two hundred and fifty pounds will be nearer the true price."

Muir, who at sixty has more the air of a professor than a speculator, says, "A bookseller must be a born gambler. I often see things I know nothing about, but I get a feeling I can sell them, and I have to make up my mind on the spot about what to offer."

The bulk of his trade, however, is based on knowledge acquired from years of experience of the value of old books and manuscripts. Since 1942 he has had complete control of the firm of Elkin Mathews, which he first joined as a junior partner, and he was recently referred to by a book collector as "that mandarin of the antiquarian book world."

He runs his business from a building made of the wood from a disused hen battery and erected beside his three hundred year old house in the village of Takeley, Essex. "I moved from London at the beginning of the war, and decided not to go back," he says. "I lose some business by being off the beat, but the overheads are lower, and I don't have the personal wear and tear of travelling to town every day." Usually, the books on his shelves are worth between £10,000 and £15,000. He considers himself lucky if he turns over his stock twice in a year.

Sometimes when Muir thinks he has gambled and lost, he finds later that the book he has bought is highly valuable. One customer asked him to look out for an imperfect set of first editions of the works of Jane Austen, for which the customer could pay no more than £25. Muir bought a "rather mouldy" set for £15. When his customer saw them, he said, "I want something better than that."

Wondering how he could ever sell such an

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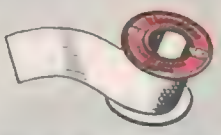

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unattractive set, Muir began examining the books so as to describe them in a catalogue. On the blank end-paper of one he found the name of Cassandra Elizabeth Austen, Jane's sister, written in her own hand: and in the margins he discovered five hand-written corrections by Jane Austen herself. In his catalogue he priced the books at more than £2,000 "They didn't quite fetch that much, but I did very nicely."

Fashions in books change, however, and this can lead to severe depreciation. In the 1920s, John Galsworthy's *The Man of Property* was sold for £150. Today it is worth £6. The present fashion is for the first editions of James Joyce, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, among modern writers.

Recently, a young man told Muir he had inherited £1,000 and thought he would invest it in books. "I sent him away," says Muir. "Books are a bad investment. In the nineteen-thirties we wrote thirteen thousand pounds off the value of our stock."

### New Ideas From Old

Among Muir's customers are people who take more than a collector's interest in rare books. One is an artist who illustrates books; he collects old book illustrations and draws new ideas from them. One man collects old sample books of silks and satins. "He is obviously contemplating writing a history of silk manufacture," says Muir. Two or three people are always asking Muir for old sample books of wallpaper, from which they form new ideas on interior decoration.

Occasionally an old book can solve minor historical mysteries. One of Muir's Continental agents unearthed the French exercise books of Charlotte and Emily Brontë. The books had remained with the family of a man named Héger, head of the academy which the sisters attended in Brussels.

"I found Emily's exercises very lightly corrected," says Muir, "but Charlotte's were marked more carefully, with little hints written at the side. There has long been a theory that there was some sort of attachment between Charlotte and Héger. The difference in the corrections, and the fact that Héger kept the books all his life, seem to prove the theory." The books are now in the Brontë Museum at Haworth Parsonage, Yorkshire.

When his firm had a shop in London, Muir was telephoned one day by another dealer who knew that Muir had a copy of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Travels With A Donkey*, bearing an inscription written by Stevenson.

"I have your copy in front of me," said the other dealer. "A man is trying to sell it to me."

Muir told him to take the man to the British Museum on the pretext of verifying the authenticity of the inscription. Muir went by taxi to the Museum, spoke to the policeman at the gate and had the man arrested.

"He was selling the book for someone else," says Muir. "We never caught the real thief."

### Cheque Was Returned

Twice, Muir has been the victim of tricksters. A man dressed as a clergyman told him one day that he was a curate who had collected £25 as a retiring present for his vicar, and he wanted a first edition of *The Compleat Angler* by Izaak Walton. When Muir told him that the book would cost nearer £250, he chose instead a first edition of John Donne's *Sermons*. He gave a trustee's cheque for £25 to Muir, who gave him the book and £12 10s. change.

"Two days later I was offered the identical book by another bookseller," Muir recalls. "The day after that, the cheque came back from the bank."

One day, a little man with grey sidewhiskers and wearing a billycock hat, a grey tweed suit and a tail coat, entered Muir's shop carrying a Gladstone bag. He said he was a churchwarden of a country parish, and that the vicar had died and left his books to raise a fund for the repair of the church roof.

He had a list of the books, and when Muir asked about a copy of *Pride And Prejudice* he saw listed, the little man said: "The binding is nothing special—just cardboard with little labels stuck on."

This meant it was probably a first edition, and Muir's interest was aroused. After promising he would send the books, the little man turned at the door and said: "Oh, I did bring one thing with me." From his bag he took out a plan of the Battle Of Bunker Hill.

"I gave him a good price for it in the hope of getting the books," says Muir. "Later, I found that he had sold seventeen similar plans to other booksellers, each time taking whatever he was offered, even if it was only a pound. They were fakes, of course, and there were no books to be had from any country parish."

### Soft-shoe Dancer

Muir, who was born in London in 1894, first worked as secretary to a clergyman. After the first World War he became for a time a singer and soft-shoe dancer. He was reviewing films for a film trade paper when he decided to become a bookseller.

"My father was incapable of handling money successfully, and I was always having to fork out small amounts at short notice," he says. "One of these emergencies arose when I had no resources other than a lot of books." A dealer sorted the books, put sixty of them on one side, and offered more for the sixty than Muir had expected for his whole collection.

Discovering that the sixty were first editions, Muir borrowed a list of "wanted" books from the dealer, and picked up some of them as he browsed through bookshops. "I passed them on to the dealer at a small profit, but I soon realized that he was not doing himself any harm." He decided to go into the business himself in 1923.

After running his own shop for a time, he became junior partner in a larger firm. One day he was asked to lunch by an elderly man who showed him a copy of *Christabel*, by Coleridge, for which he had paid half a crown many years earlier. Muir knew the book was valuable, but had no idea of its price. When the man suggested £50, he bought the book for that sum.

"At the shop they bawled me out for staying so long at lunch," says Muir. "They were horrified to hear that I had paid fifty pounds for *Christabel*. I slipped out to another bookshop, where I was told they had been offered two hundred pounds for a copy in its original wrappers, as this was. Back I went, in great glee, to find that my firm had been so scared of losing on the book that they had sold it for fifty-five pounds."

### Loss—And Profit

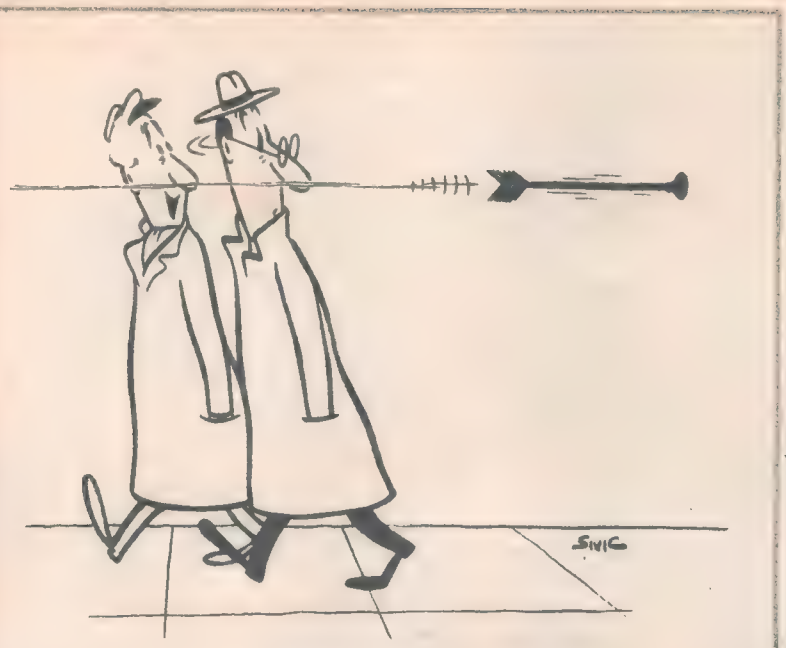
Since then Muir has learned how easy it is to lose heavily on the rarest of books. "I paid three hundred and fifty pounds at an auction for a first edition of Byron's *Don Juan*," he says. "I judged its rarity correctly, but I hadn't realized that there was little demand for the book. I was glad to sell it for sixty pounds."

He more than made up for this loss when a customer asked him to obtain a Macklin Bible, printed in the early nineteenth century. Soon afterwards a Macklin Bible came up for auction at Sotheby's. Muir, who did not have time to examine it before the sale, bought it for £5 10s. while other dealers looked on without interest.

Each of the eleven volumes of the Bible was five inches thick and had the page size of a small newspaper.

The customer Muir had bought them for decided that he did not want them. Despairing of ever selling them, Muir began looking through some of the volumes. He found that at one time they had been rebound with extra illustrations. The first illustration he saw was a print of Dürer's *The Prodigal Son*, worth £200. Next, he discovered a print of *Christ Shown To The People*, by Rembrandt. It was worth £150.

"I had bought the volumes without seeing them, in the teeth of every expert in the trade," says Muir. "They contained, altogether, prints worth two thousand pounds." THE END




"Nearly home!"

## TO BE SOLD THIS DAY

*Continued from page 13*

sullenly as the new man returned to his sleek car, drove it through the gate and then stopped to close the gate behind him. No one could have said Sankey was not handling the situation with tact.

If Peter hated the people who had come to spend their good money buying his father's stock, his feelings towards the "new man," who had taken over the farm itself, were almost too deep to find expression in anything but awkward bad manners. He was sure that Sankey, with his smart car, would have endless tractors, pick-up balers and even a £3,000 combine. And it would pay him. That was the galling part about it. With Sankey's money, anyone could make a go of it, Peter thought.

"Whatm-I-bid? Whatm-I-bid?" the auctioneer rattled on in the background.

He was now selling the old binder. With Polly, the Shire mare, and Jewel, the gelding, it had taken Peter five separate days, between rainstorms, to cut this last harvest. And even then one whole field had started to shoot, the seeds germinating in the sheaf, before they could cart it. Peter felt sure that Dad must have been the last farmer in all England to have carried on in the old way. And with a flash of pride, Peter knew that if he had not been Frank Bailey, he would not have carried on as long as he did. Only a fine farmer like Dad could have survived the war years and the War Ag without mechanization. But that was no consolation now.

WHEN the sale of livestock began, Peter went down to the yard with everyone else. This was where the real money would be made—the nest egg on which Dad and Mum would rely for the future. Old Fred brought out the horses one by one.

"Lot 181. 'Jewel'—a magnificent bay gelding . . . Whatm-I-bid?" The dreadful refrain began once more.

And so it went on, the steady disposal of Peter's background, whole slices of his life at so much a lot. His friends the horses, even Champion the bull. . . . Going . . . Going . . . Gone, for ever.

Just as Mr. Sankey had said, Peter was glad when it was all over.

Then bedlam broke loose. Trucks backed with revving engines, vans roared back and forth in the congested yard, drovers shouted and sheepdogs barked. There was the constant rattle of hoofs, the lowing of cattle. And yet in all this confusion there was order, as lot by lot the animals were driven up the slippery ramps into the dim interiors of the trucks. Now and again a heifer would run riot among the crowds and Peter saw more than one group of gossiping farmers' wives scattered anxiously in retreat.

Champ presented a problem on his own. He had been bought by a Dorset farmer, who had paid a good price. But there was no truck quite suitable for his transport. Champ would have to remain a day or two on the farm before he could be moved.

Peter waited until things had quietened down and then he led the bull back to his pasture. That armful of hay he had given the burly animal had not, after all, been quite his last job on Goodger's. His great legs carrying him with an easy swing, Peter went back for his tea.

INSIDE the kitchen, Dad and the auctioneer were reckoning up the day. There were papers and account books all over the table. Dad worked steadily through his catalogue, now much thumbed. The auctioneer and his clerk did the arithmetic.

"A lot of stuff fetched more'n it was worth," said Mr. Cranstone, scribbling rapidly.

"And a lot was given away," said Dad. "But it's beginning to look a fair sum."

"Don't think we've done too badly," said the auctioneer.

Peter was standing by the window, whittling a stick he had plucked from the hedge. Then his mother came into the room and he bent down instinctively and tidied up the shavings with his hand.

"How much do you reckon Sankey's got to spend on the place?" Peter asked suddenly of no one in particular.

Mr. Cranstone looked up from his books and took the question very seriously. "Oh, he's a big man . . ." he said at length.

Peter threw down the shavings and snapped home the blade of his pocket-knife.

"Looks a bit of a runt to me," he said, going out into the passage.

As Peter took his twelve-bore from the rack beside the office he could hear his father's voice. "Don't mind the lad," he was saying apologetically. "It's hard on him, you know."

Peter slammed the back door as he went out into the half light of the evening. It was very strange now: as if the whole world had suddenly been muffled. Even the chirrupping of the sparrows in the eaves of the barn seemed to fill the yard with noise. A pigeon, flying high above him, could be heard by the swish of its wings. For these were now the only sounds. The farm was empty.

Going through the gate into Long Meadow, he strode up towards the woods which fringed the bottom of the Downs. There was bracken there and pigeons in the trees, and rabbits and even a pheasant or two. Once he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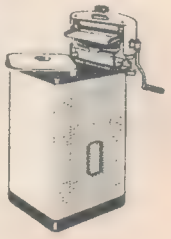

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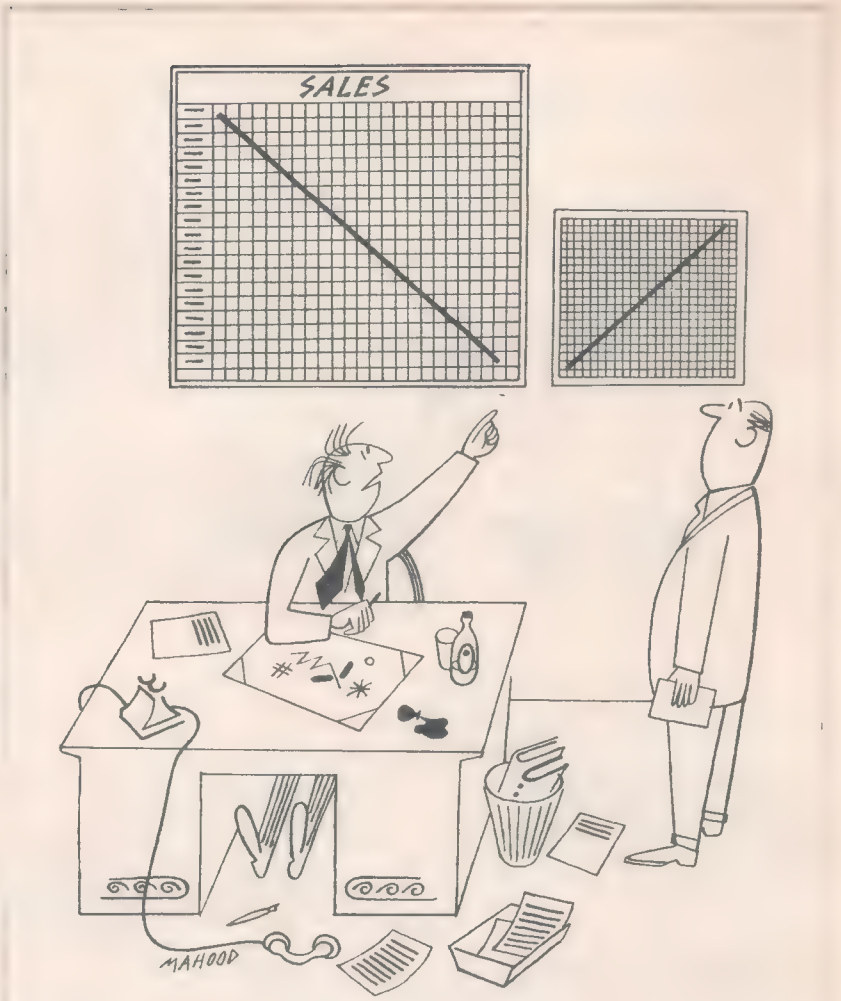


"That's my temperature"

reached the bracken he walked more slowly, his old hammer gun ready and cocked. He felt better at last.

Suddenly a rabbit started into view. Peter raised the gun and fired. In a flurry of white tail and tumbled fur, the rabbit rolled over and lay kicking. Quickly the young giant reached for the tiny animal and put it out of pain with a single, skilled blow from the edge of his hand on the back of the rabbit's neck. Then there was a rustle among the undergrowth and a man came into view in the half light.

"Thought likely as not it was you shooting," said Fred.

Peter smiled for the first time that day. Fred, too, had a shotgun under his arm. "Who else?" asked Peter. "Or you'd have been gone before now, you old poacher!"

Fred looked up, grinning, nodded towards the dangling rabbit in Peter's hand. "Poacher yerself now!" he said.

Peter looked at his rabbit in surprise. "Suppose I am, come to think of it!" he answered, almost cheerfully.

"Makes you think, don't it?" said Fred, standing up.

"You be working for the new man?" Peter asked.

"Him?" Fred's voice was full of scorn.

"Didn't think you would," said Peter, somehow relieved.

FRED took out his pipe and started to fill it. The black shag tanged pleasantly in the evening air. He nodded in the direction of the trees. "Proper lost, he was," Fred said.

"Sankey?"

Fred nodded. "He was lucky I didn't shoot him. Thought he was a fox, when I heard him coming through the bracken." Fred laughed suddenly. "Pity I didn't some ways!" he added.

"Did he see you?" asked Peter.

"Yes. Had quite a little chat, we did. He's only just gone." Fred attempted an imitation of Mr. Sankey's voice: "Which is the best way back to the farm from heah?" he said, mouthing the words not very successfully.

Peter nodded. Fred puffed hard at his old pipe, blew out a match. Then he dropped back into his usual voice. "Sent him down through Top Field and Highlands," he said.

"Highlands?"

"Shortest way."

"Champion!"

Fred thought for a moment. "Cor," he said at length. "Forgot about him. Put him back, didn't you?"

But Peter was already on his way. Still carrying the gun, he went down the hill in great bounds. It was a mile from Meddlar's Wood, a mile down hill, and Peter kept up his speed all the way. His breath came in great gasps, his chest heaved enormously as he stopped at the gate. Beyond was the dim field where he had left the bull.

Leaning his gun against the hedge, he vaulted the gate and walked quickly across the field, his head thrust forward as he peered into the twilight. Then he stopped suddenly.

Far over on the other side was Champ, his tail held high, his legs splayed, his horns tossing wildly. And tight against the wire, apparently unable to move to turn his back to climb through to safety, was Mr. Sankey—a squat little figure dark against the black hedgerow.

As Peter started running again, the bull charged. It was a terrifying sight. The man by the hedge thrust forward helplessly with his arms, clawing at the ring in the bull's nose. But he failed to find it. His hands clung then in desperation to the horns. The bull paused a fraction of a second, and then jerked his head. The little man sailed high into the air, his legs kicking for a moment against the light sky. Then he fell to the ground. Champ backed away for a second attack.

As Peter knew, it was not as dangerous to be tossed by a bull as to be pinned to the hard ground by its horns. In open combat the human body gives, the blunt horns bruise and crush, but do not kill. Once down, the bullfighter must rise—or go under. Mr. Sankey attempted to rise, then he collapsed again with a groan. Champ charged over.

Without slackening speed, Peter drove on, directly across the bull's line of charge. For an instant the great animal turned its head—and in that

instant the sense of direction was lost. With a tremendous momentum, the bull swept past the form of Mr. Sankey on the ground, the horns missing him by inches. Then Champ skidded, splay-legged, to a halt, turned with amazing agility and stood for a moment reviewing the opposition: wild-eyed, his nostrils gently throwing jets of warm air into the cool of the evening.

Peter had turned also. With one vast stride he reached for the bull's halter and held it. Then a great hand enclosed the ring in the animal's nose. Behind the lunging movement with which Champ now attacked there was not only the force of his legs, but the muscles of his powerful neck, the wide expanse of his back. Instinctively the animal knew that only a forward movement was possible—for by long experience it had learned that to pull or slip sideways from the ring only hurt the sensitive tissues of its nose.

Even Peter's great strength was not enough to withstand this onslaught. His legs buckled slowly, his back bent and then he went under. . . . But his hands still held the halter and the ring. Slowly the front knees of Champion went down as Peter on the ground took the animal's weight on his chest. Gasping for breath from his run, Peter found this pressure on his lungs an agony difficult to endure. He spoke only in a whisper, edging the words out between the taut muscles of his throat.

"Up, old boy. . . . Come on—up, old boy!"

And the bull obeyed. The front legs straightened, the head went up and, still holding the halter and the ring, Peter followed, gasping air back into his flattened lungs.

Suddenly from the ground behind him, Peter heard a groan. He looked round. Mr. Sankey was sitting up, holding his right thigh. His face was pale and drawn.

"I think it's broken," he said through gritted teeth.

Peter nodded. "Someone coming," he panted.

Across the field a dark figure appeared. It was Fred.

LATER that night, Peter and his father went down for a well-earned pint at The Crab Tree Inn. They ordered their beer and then sat together in the chimney corner. Because of the autumn chill in the air, a bright fire of logs was burning in the grate. Then Fred came in. He also ordered beer and sat down with them. They seemed like three conspirators.

It had been a big day for Mr. Bailey and the landlord was tactful. But there was definitely something in the air: something bigger than the sale. The landlord was puzzled. Then Bill came in and ordered. The landlord raised his eyebrows, asking a question. Bill was easy, talkative.

"Ain't you heard?" he said happily. "That new man Sankey went and got himself tossed by Mr. Bailey's bull—and now he's put young Peter in as manager. That's right, isn't it, Peter?"

And Peter, his huge form blocking most of the fire, gulped his beer and nodded.

"And Mr. Sankey's not going to live here anyway, not even when his leg's mended. Staying on his own place. . . . That's right, isn't it, Peter?"

And Peter nodded again.

"And there's going to be all the machinery in the world up there at Goodger's!" Bill finished triumphantly.

Fred cut across the ensuing excitement with one of those rural puzzlers, so beloved in Sussex.

"If you was up Meddlar's Wood," he began, "which would you say was the shortest way down to Goodger's.

"Well," said Bill, considering it deeply. "Down through Top Field and across Highlands, I'd reckon."

"Exactly what I told him," said Fred seriously.

There was a pause while everyone digested this. Then Peter spoke, almost excusing himself.

"I've heard tell they shoot a bull that kills a man," he said apologetically. THE END

## THE LIGHTS OF BRIA

*Continued from page 21*

of McKay's voice behind him. "Stop that! Throw the parachute here. Quickly now!"

He turned slowly and saw the gun shaking in the old man's hand. "Look, McKay," he said. "We're all of us within spitting distance of some kind of death. You don't think the threat of getting there a little ahead of schedule frightens me, do you?"

McKay jerked the gun ominously. "There are six bullets here, Captain. If you don't hand that parachute over, there'll be one for each of you. Then you'll all be ahead of schedule together."

The woman touched his hand. "Give it him, señor. I shall not use it. Better not let it go to waste."

Mac was judging the weight of the pack. A quick throw might knock the gun out of McKay's hand. But it was too risky. Even if no one got hit, the bullet might go through the silk and ruin it for any of them.

"Here," he said. "Take it. Only why an old has-been like you should want to live so much beats me." He threw the parachute down at McKay's feet.

The old man bent and picked it up. He began to pull the straps feverishly round him with one hand, covering them all the time with the gun in the other.

"It's obvious you've never lived with a dream, Captain," he said, fumbling with the clasp. "I've gambled forty years of my life away in this sewer of a country, waiting for a strike."

He snapped the last catch and eased himself into the straps. "Well—my gamble came off. D'you know what I found? Diamonds. Millions of dollars worth. Billions maybe. They said the rock formation wasn't right for them. But I knew better. I always knew better." He chuckled and slapped his stomach. "There's enough in this belt to see me out in the style I mean to keep. D'you think I'd be cheated out of that for the sake of any damned half-breed?"

He ran to the door and tugged at the lever. "This is one time when it's every man for himself," he said.

He wrenched open the door and leaped out. The cabin filled with a howling gale and the roar of the engines. They all heard McKay's cackling laugh die in the wind.

The other man ran with Mac to force the door shut. As they strained against the pressure, the man gave a sudden shout. "Señor. Look! In that gap. Lights!"

"By God—you're right!"

Leaving him to close the door, Mac ran to the cockpit. There should be three minutes' fuel left. If they were lucky that would be just enough. . . .

IT was the next day. Marion said: "I wonder where McKay landed?" Mac saw Jim coming towards them across the bar floor. "We'll soon know," he said. "Jim's been at the company office all day waiting for news."

They both swung on their stools to greet Jim.

As he came up to them, Marion said: "Has McKay turned up yet?"

Jim shook his head. "He's dead."

Mac said: "Where is he?"

"He must have drifted quite a way. The 'chute caught over the edge of a cliff. He was hung a hundred feet over the rocks. He must have known the silk would give sooner or later. So he shot himself before it did."

Mac gave a whistle. "I won't pretend I'm shedding any tears. But we have him to thank for being here. If he hadn't jumped just when he did we'd never have seen the lights. You can't help wishing he could have lived to enjoy those diamonds."

Jim took the stool beside them. He looked tired and drawn. "I think he's better off where he is," he said. "The office say those stones of his were worth exactly nothing. Just shiny bits of rock. They say the hills are littered with them in some areas." THE END

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## DESTINATION UNKNOWN

*Continued from page 26*

on. Who, by the way, owns the place? Who are the philanthropists who endowed it and set it up?"

"That is easily ascertained. A little minute."

Leblanc returned shortly, an official reference book in his hand. He said: "It was founded by a group of whom the chief is Aristides. As you know, he is a man of fabulous wealth, and gives generously to charitable enterprises. This is, to all intents and purposes, his show—the other benefactors are a group of his associates."

"So—it's an enterprise. *And Aristides was in Fez when Olive Betterton was there.*"

"Aristides!" Leblanc savoured the full implication. *"Mais—c'est colossal!"*

"Yes."

*"C'est formidable!"*

"Definitely."

"But do you realize how formidable it is?" Leblanc shook an excited forefinger in the other's face. "This Aristides, one never sees him, one hardly hears him, but he has a finger in every pie. He sits in a warm room smoking, and sometimes he scrawls a few words on a little piece of paper and throws it on the ground, and a secretary crawls forward and picks it up, and a few days later an important banker in Paris blows his brains out! It is like that!"

"How wonderfully dramatic you are, Leblanc. But it is really not very surprising. In fact, if we'd had any sense we'd have thought of it before. The whole thing's a vast commercial ramp. It's not political at all. The question is," he added, "what are we going to do about it?"

Leblanc's face grew gloomy. He said: "It is not going to be easy. If we are wrong—I dare not think of it! And even if we are right—we have got to prove we are right. If we make investigations—those investigations can be called off at the highest level. You understand? No, it is not going to be easy. . . . But," he waggled an emphatic stubby forefinger, "it will be done."

FOUR cars swept up the mountain road and stopped in front of the great gate set in the rock. In the first was a French Minister and the American Ambassador, in the second was the British Consul, a Member of Parliament and the Chief of Police. In the third car were two members of a former Royal Commission and two distinguished journalists. The complement of these three cars was made up with the necessary satellites. The fourth car contained certain people not known to the general public. They included Captain Leblanc and Mr. Jessop.

"One hopes," murmured the Minister, apprehensively, "that there will be no possibility of a *contact* of any kind with the terrifying disease."

The great gates were flung open. On the threshold stood a small party bowing to welcome them. The director, dark, thick-set, the deputy director, big and fair, two distinguished doctors and a distinguished research chemist. The greetings were French, florid and prolonged.

"M. Aristides awaits you within," said the deputy director. "Permit me, Your Excellency—M. le Ministre, to lead the way."

The party followed him. M. le Ministre, who was slightly apprehensive, glanced through the heavy railings to his right. The lepers were drawn up to attention in a serried row as far as possible from the grating. The Minister looked relieved.

In the well-furnished modern lounge, M. Aristides was awaiting his guests. There were bows, compliments, introductions. Aperitifs were served by the dark-faced servants dressed in their white robes and turbans. Then, under the leadership of the genial Dr. Van Heidem, the guests moved enthusiastically into the dining-room.

The meal was accompanied by choice vintages. After it, Turkish coffee was served. The party was then asked to start on its tour of inspection. The tour took two hours and was most comprehensive. The Minister, for one, was glad when it finished. He was quite dazed by the gleaming laboratories, the endless, white, shining corridors, and still more dazed by the mass of scientific detail handed out to him.

Leblanc and Jessop, the former in attendance on the Minister and the latter accompanying the British Consul, fell a little behind the others as they all returned to the lounge.

"There is no trace here, nothing," murmured Leblanc in an agitated manner.

"Of course there is no trace. For these official visits everything is prepared and arranged."

"Then how are we to get our evidence? I tell you, without evidence no one will move in the matter. They are sceptical, all of them. The Minister, the American Ambassador, the British Consul—they say, all of them, that a man like Aristides is above suspicion."

"Keep calm, Leblanc, keep calm. We're not licked yet. I'm counting on two things."

"What can they be, my friend?"

Jessop's solemn face suddenly relaxed into a grin. "There's the press," he said. "Journalists have a nose for news. They don't want it hushed up. And the other person that I have faith in," he added, "is that very deaf old man."

"The one who looks as though he crumbles to his grave?"

"Yes, he's deaf and infirm and semi-blind, but he's interested in truth. He's a former Lord Chief Justice and, though he may be shaky on his legs, his mind's as keen as ever. He's a man who'll listen, and will want to listen, to evidence."

THEY were back now in the lounge. Both tea and aperitifs were provided. The Minister congratulated M. Aristides in well-rounded phrases. The American Ambassador added his quota. Then the Minister, looking round him, said in a slightly nervous tone of voice: "And now, gentlemen, I think the time has come for us to leave. We have seen *all there is* to see. . . ." His tone dwelt on those last words with some significance. "All here is magnificent. An establishment of the first class! We are most grateful for the hospitality of our kind host, and we congratulate him on his achievement. So we say our farewells now. . . ."

In the silence a voice spoke. It was the quiet, deferential, well-bred English voice of Mr. Jessop. He spoke to the Minister in a Britannic though idiomatic French. "With your permission, sir," he said, "and if I may do so, I would like to ask a favour of our host."

"Certainly, certainly. Of course, Mr.—ah—Mr. Jessop—yes, yes?"

Jessop addressed himself solemnly to Dr. Van Heidem: "We've met so many of your people," he said. "Quite bewildering. But there's an old friend of mine here that I'd rather like to have a word with. I wonder if it could be arranged before I go?"

"A friend of yours?" Dr. Van Heidem said politely, surprised.

"Well, two friends really," said Jessop. "There's a woman, Mrs. Betterton. Olive Betterton. I believe her husband's working here. Tom Betterton. Used to be at Harwell and before that in America. I'd very much like to have a word with them both before I go."

Dr. Van Heidem's reactions were perfect. His eyes opened in wide and polite surprise. He frowned in a puzzled way.

"Betterton — Mrs. Betterton — no, I'm afraid we have no one of that name here."

"There's an American, too," said Jessop, "Andrew Peters. Research chemistry, I believe, is his line. I'm right, sir, aren't I?" He turned deferentially to the American Ambassador.

The ambassador was a shrewd, middle-aged man with keen blue eyes. He was a man of character as well as diplomatic ability. His eyes met Jessop's. He took a full minute to decide, and then he spoke.

"Why, yes," he said. "That's so. Andrew Peters. I'd like to see him."

Van Heidem's polite bewilderment grew. Jessop unobtrusively shot a quick glance at M. Aristides. The little yellow face betrayed no knowledge of anything amiss, no surprise, no disquietude. He looked merely uninterested.

"Andrew Peters? No, I'm afraid, Your Excellency, you've got your facts wrong," said Van Heidem. "We've no one of that name here. I'm afraid I don't even know the name."

"You know the name of Thomas Betterton, don't you?" said Jessop.

Just for a second, Van Heidem hesitated. His head turned very slightly towards the old man in the chair, but he caught himself back in time.

"Thomas Betterton," he said. "Why, yes, I think——"

ONE of the gentlemen of the press spoke up quickly on that cue. "Thomas Betterton," he said. "The scientist who disappeared in Paris? Why, he's made the headlines all over Europe. Do you mean to say he's been here all the time?"

"No." Van Heidem spoke sharply. "Someone, I fear, has been misinforming you. A hoax, perhaps. You have seen today all our workers at the Unit. You have seen everything."

"Not quite everything, I think," said Jessop, quietly. "There's a young man called Ericsson, too. And Dr. Louis Barron, and possibly Mrs. Calvin Baker."

"Ah!" Dr. Van Heidem seemed to receive enlightenment. "But those people were killed in Morocco—in a plane crash. I remember it perfectly now. At least I remember Ericsson was in the crash and Dr. Louis Barron. Ah, France sustained a great loss that day. A man such as Louis Barron is hard to replace."

He looked across inquiringly at Jessop. "I do not know, monsieur, why you should suppose that these people were coming *here*."

"So you tell me," said Jessop, "that I am mistaken? That these people are none of them here?"

"But how can they be, my dear sir, since they were all killed in this plane accident? The bodies were recovered, I believe."

"The bodies recovered were too badly charred for identification." Jessop spoke the last words with deliberation and significance.

There was a little stir behind him. A thin, precise, very attenuated voice said: "Do I understand you to say that there was no precise identification?" Lord Alverstoke was leaning forward, his hand to his ear. Under

# Consider your verdict

*by*

*RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.*

MR. DINER had made himself very comfortable in his rented flat; among other improvements, he had put antique oak panelling round the walls of his dining-room. It was fastened to the walls by plugs and screws, and had been there for some years.

When he decided to move, Diner arranged to take the panelling with him. His landlord heard that he was removing it and objected, claiming that it had become a fixture in the flat and now belonged to him.

Diner insisted on taking the panelling away—and found himself sued for damages.

In court, the landlord said: "Diner put up this panelling years ago, when he made several other improvements to the flat. It entirely altered the appearance of the dining-room, and was a fixture. Panels are very different from curtains or pictures, which are easily removable."

Diner put his case strongly to the judge. "I went to a lot of trouble to install the panelling," he said, "but I had no intention of making a gift of it to the landlord. It's mine to do what I like with and the removal was not a big job.

"I have been an excellent tenant, but the landlord cannot take advantage of that to improve his property.

The landlord retorted that the tenant's intention was not decisive in determining whether an improvement had become part of the premises. "Diner acted in a certain way," he concluded, "and the result of his action was to make the panelling a fixture."

*What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, turn to page 34*

# Oh, so easy! Oh, so lovely! Oh, so grand!

## Apricot Rice Meringue

It looks like the last word in complicated cooking, and it tastes as grand as it looks. Yet you make it simply with a one, two, three ! One, a layer of juicy fruit ; two, a layer of creamy rice ; three, a layer of brittle sugar meringue. Three tiers that win three rousing cheers when Apricot Rice Meringue appears. Yes dears, you can believe your ears : this is the sort of sweet that needs a poem to describe it !

**ONE, TWO, THREE**

Here it is, and it serves **FOUR**

You will need : 1 *lb. cooked or canned fruit*, 2 *tablespoonfuls cooked rice*, 1 *egg*, ½ *tin Nestlé's Milk*, *fresh milk*, 1 *oz. castor sugar*, *glacé cherries and angelica.*

Place fruit in bottom of fireproof dish reserving 4 or 6 of the best apricots for decoration. Mix Nestlé's Milk with fresh milk to thickness of cream, add egg yolk and rice and pour over fruit. Whisk white of egg and add sugar, whisk lightly and pile on top of rice. Bake in slow moderate oven, Mark 2, until set. Decorate with the apricots, cup side up, with a cherry in each. Add leaves of angelica.

*This is one from scores of their "Favourite Recipes", which Nestlé's will be happy to send you FREE, if you write to The Nestlé Company Ltd. (Dept.* 25), *Hayes, Middlesex.*

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NEW RICHARD HUDNUT *lipstick*

A new longer-lasting lanolin-rich formula that seals clear, fresh colour on your lips without that dull, dry look. It's shaped to follow your lip contour . . . to give a clean, sharp outline with ease. In elegant case with a crystal-clear base . . . six fashion-cued colours. Price 8/6d.

bushy, overhanging eyebrows, his small, keen eyes looked into Jessop's.

"There could be no formal identification, my lord," said Jessop, "and I have reason to believe these people survived that accident."

"Believe?" said Lord Alverstoke, with displeasure in his thin, high voice.

"I should have said I have evidence of survival."

"Evidence? Of what nature, Mr. er—er—Jessop?"

"Mrs. Betterton was wearing a choker of false pearls on the day she left Fez for Marrakesh. I had reason to believe that she would lead me to her husband, Thomas Betterton, against whom a warrant is out," said Jessop. "One of these pearls was found at a distance of half a mile from the burned-out plane. Two more came to light on stages of a route between the plane and the settlement where we are now. Inquiries in the places where these pearls were found resulted in a description of six people, roughly approximating to those people who were supposed to have been burned in the plane."

"Very remarkable," Lord Alverstoke commented in his dry, judicial voice.

In the big chair, M. Aristides stirred. His eyelids blinked once or twice rapidly. Then he asked: "Where were the last traces of this party of people found?"

"At a disused airfield, sir." Jessop gave the precise location.

"That is many hundreds of miles from here," said M. Aristides. "Granted that your very interesting speculations are correct, that for some reason the accident was faked, these passengers, I gather, then took off from this disused airport for some unknown destination. Since that airport is many hundreds of miles from here, I really cannot see on what you base your belief that these people are here. Why should they be?"

"There are certain very good reasons, sir. A signal was picked up by one of our searching aeroplanes. Commencing with a special code recognition signal, it gave the information that the people in question were at a leper settlement."

"I find this remarkable," said M. Aristides. "Very remarkable. But it seems to me that there is no doubt that an attempt has been made to mislead you. These people are not here." He spoke with a quiet, definite decision. "You are at perfect liberty to search the settlement if you like."

"I doubt if we should find anything, sir," said Jessop, "not, that is, by superficial search. Although," he added deliberately, "I am positive these people are being kept here."

Van Heidem said sharply: "It's preposterous. Absolutely preposterous! You are suggesting that we are detaining people here against their will. I deny that categorically."

The Minister said uncomfortably: "We seem to have arrived at an impasse."

MONSIEUR ARISTIDES said gently: "It has been an interesting theory. But it is only a theory." He glanced at his watch. "You will excuse me, gentlemen, if I suggest you should leave now. You have a long drive to the airport, and there will be alarm if your plane is overdue."

Both Leblanc and Jessop realized that things had now reached a deadlock. Aristides was exerting all the force of his considerable personality. He was daring them to oppose his will, and there seemed to be little more they could do because they had no real support. The Minister appeared anxious to back out; the Chief of Police wished only to be agreeable to the Minister; the American Ambassador was not satisfied, but he, too, for diplomatic reasons would hesitate to insist. And the British Consul would have to fall in with the other two.

But now a cold, clear, far-away little voice was making itself heard. "I am of the opinion," said the voice of the ex-Lord Chief Justice, "that we should not unduly hurry our departure. For there is a case here that it seems to me would bear further inquiry. Grave allegations have been made and should not, I consider, be allowed to drop. In fairness every opportunity should be given to rebut them."

"The onus of proof," said M. Aristides, "is on you." He made a graceful gesture towards the company. "A preposterous accusation has been made, unsupported by any evidence."

"Not unsupported."

Dr. Van Heidem swung round in surprise. One of the Moroccan servants had stepped forward. He was a fine figure of a man in white embroidered robes with a white turban surrounding his head. His face gleamed black and oily.

What caused the entire company to gaze at him in speechless astonishment was the fact that from his full, rather negroid lips a voice of purely transatlantic origin was proceeding.

"Not unsupported," that voice said. "You can take my evidence here and now. These gentlemen have denied that Andrew Peters, Torquil Ericsson, Mr. and Mrs. Betterton and Dr. Louis Barron are here. That's false. They're *all* here—and I speak for them." He took a step forward towards the American Ambassador. "You may find me a bit difficult to recognize at the moment, sir," he said, "but I am Andrew Peters."

A VERY faint, sibilant hiss issued from M. Aristides's lips, then he settled back in his chair, his face impassive once more.

"There's a whole crowd of people hidden away here," said Peters. "There's Schwartz of Munich, there's Helga Needheim, there are Jeffreys and Davidson, the English scientists, there's Paul Wade from the U.S.A., there are the Italians, Ricochetti and Bianco, there's Murchison. They're all right here in this building."

"God bless my soul," ejaculated the American Ambassador. He looked searchingly at the dignified African figure, and then he began to laugh. "I wouldn't say I'd recognize you even now," he said.

"That's the injection of paraffin in the lips, sir, to say nothing of black pigment."

"If you're Peters, what's the number you go under in the F.B.I.?"

"813471, sir."

"Right," said the ambassador, "and the initials of your other name?"

"B.A.P.G., sir."

The Ambassador nodded. "This man is Peters," he said. He looked towards the Minister.

The Minister hesitated, then cleared his throat. "You claim," he demanded of Peters, "that people are being detained here against their will?"

"Some are here willingly, Excellency, and some are not."

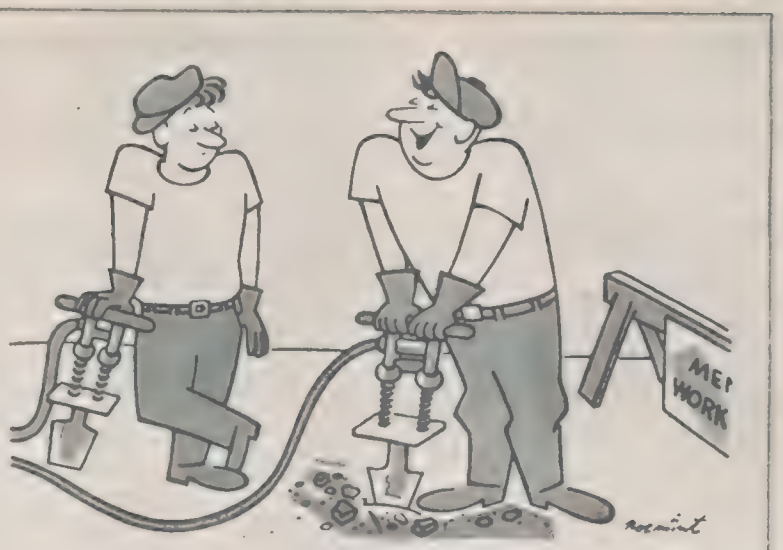
"In that case," said the Minister, "statements must be taken—er—yes, yes, statements must certainly be taken."

He looked at the Prefect of Police. The latter stepped forward.

"Just a moment, please." M. Aristides raised a hand. "It would seem," he said, in a gentle, precise voice, "that my confidence here has been greatly abused." His cold glance went from Van Heidem to the director and there was implacable command in it. "As to what you have permitted yourselves to do, gentlemen, in your enthusiasm for science, I am not as yet quite clear. My endowment of this

## Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 32, the judge agreed that the tenant's intention alone has little to do with turning an improvement into a "landlord's" fixture. The deciding factor is whether it has become an integral part of the premises, or whether the premises suffer by its removal. Diner's panelling was easily removable, without causing damage, and it was not an integral part of the flat. Therefore he was within his rights in removing it. The landlord lost the case. (*This is the probable verdict, based on actual cases.*)




"No—that was *Stardust*. Now try to guess this one!"

place was purely in the interests of research. I have taken no part in the practical application of its policy. I would advise you, Monsieur le Directeur, if this accusation is borne out by facts, to produce immediately those people who are suspected of being detained here unlawfully."

"But, monsieur, it is impossible. I —it will be——"

"Any experiment of that kind," said M. Aristides, "is at an end." His calm gaze swept over his guests. "I need hardly assure you, messieurs," he said, "that if anything illegal is going on here it has been no concern of mine."

It was an order and understood as such because of his wealth, because of his power and because of his influence. M. Aristides, that world-famous figure, would not be implicated in this affair. It was defeat, but he himself would escape unscathed; as, perhaps, he had emerged from other defeats.

He made an Oriental gesture with his hand. "I wash my hands of this affair," he said.

The Prefect of Police bustled forward. He recognized his cue now, he knew what his instructions were and he was prepared to go ahead with the full force of his official position.

"I want no obstructions," he said. "It is my duty."

His face very pale, Van Heidem stepped forward.

"If you will come this way," he said, "I will show you our reserve accommodation."

THEY were sitting on the terrace of the hotel in Tangier. They had arrived there earlier that morning by plane. "Oh, I feel as if I'd woken up out of a nightmare," sighed Hilary. She stretched her arms wide above her head. "Did it all happen? It can't have!"

"It happened all right," said Tom Betterton, "but I agree with you, Olive, it was a nightmare. Ah well, I'm out of it now."

Jessop came along the terrace and sat down beside them.

"Where's Andy Peters?" asked Hilary.

"He'll be here presently," said Jessop. "He has a bit of business to attend to."

"So Peters was one of your people," said Hilary. "I never knew."

"No," said Jessop, "you were both very discreet with each other."

"That's what you meant by saying that if I actually reached Tom here, you hoped I should have protection? You meant Andy Peters."

Jessop nodded. "I hope you're not blaming me," he said in his most owl-like manner, "for not providing you with the desired end to your experience."

Hilary looked puzzled. "What end?"

"A more sporting form of suicide," he said.

"Oh, that!" She shook her head incredulously. "That seems just as unreal as anything else. I've been Olive Betterton so long now that I'm feeling quite confused to be Hilary Craven again."

"Ah," said Jessop, "there is my friend, Leblanc. I must go and speak to him."

He left them and walked along the terrace. Tom Betterton said, quickly: "Do one more thing for me, will you, Olive? I call you Olive still—I've got used to it."

"Yes, of course. What is it?"

"Walk along the terrace with me, then come back here and say that I've gone up to my room to lie down."

She looked at him questioningly. "Why? What are you——"

"I'm off, my dear, while the going's good."

"Off? Where?"

"Anywhere."

"But why?"

"Use your head, my dear girl. I don't know what the status is here. Tangier is an odd sort of place not under the jurisdiction of any particular country. But I know what'll happen if I come with the rest of you to Gibraltar. I shall be arrested."

Hilary looked at him with concern. In the excitement of their escape from the Unit, she had forgotten Tom Betterton's troubles.

"You mean the Official Secrets Act, or whatever they call it? But you can't really hope to get away, Tom. There's money and all sorts of difficulties."

He gave a short laugh.

"The money's all right. It's salted away where I can get at it under a new name."

"So you *did* take money?"

"Of course I took money."

"But they'll track you down."

"They'll find it hard to do that. . . . That's why I was so keen on this plastic surgery business."

Hilary looked at him doubtfully. "You're wrong," she said. "I'm sure you're wrong. It'd be far better to go back and face the music. After all, it's not wartime. You'd only get a short term of imprisonment, I expect. What's the good of being hounded for the rest of your life?"

"You don't understand," he said. "You don't understand the first thing about it all. Come on, let's get going. There's no time to lose."

"But how are you going to get away from Tangier?"

"I'll manage. Don't you worry."

She got up from her seat and walked with him slowly along the terrace. She felt curiously inadequate and tongue-tied. She and Tom Betterton had shared weeks of the closest association and yet she felt they were still strangers to each other. No bond of fellowship or friendship had grown up between them.

They reached the end of the terrace. There was a small side door there through the wall which led out on to a narrow road which curved down the hill to the port.

"I shall slip out this way," said

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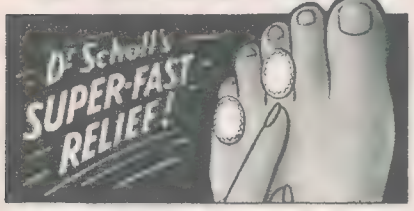


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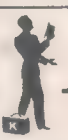

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Betterton. "Nobody's watching. So long."

"Good luck to you," said Hilary slowly.

She stood there watching Betterton as he went to the door and turned its handle. As the door opened he stepped back a pace and stopped.

Three men stood in the doorway. Two of them entered and came towards him. The first spoke formally.

"Thomas Betterton, I have here a warrant for your arrest. You will be held here in custody while extradition proceedings are taken."

Betterton turned sharply, but the other man had moved quickly round to the other side of him. Betterton said quickly: "You're making a big mistake. I am not Betterton. Look at any photograph of Betterton and you'll see I'm speaking the truth."

The third man stepped forward. It was Andy Peters. His voice was quiet and implacable.

"There is no mistake," he said. "But for purposes of identification—" he seized Betterton with a sudden strong grasp and tore off his jacket —"there should be a scar in the shape of a Z in the crook of the right elbow."

As he spoke he ripped up the shirt and bent back Betterton's arm. "And there it is," he said quietly. "There are two lab. assistants in the U.S.A. who'll testify to that. I know about it because Elsa wrote and told me when you did it."

"Elsa?" Betterton stared at him. He began to shake nervously. "Elsa? What about Elsa?"

"Ask what the charge is against you," said Peters.

The police official stepped forward once more. "The charge," he said, "is murder in the first degree. Murder of your wife, Elsa Betterton."

"I'm sorry, Olive," Andy Peters said. "You've got to believe I'm sorry. About you, I mean. For your sake I'd have given him one chance. I warned you that he'd be safer to stay in the Unit and yet I'd come half way across the world to get him, and I meant to get him for what he did to Elsa."

"I don't understand. I don't understand anything. Who are you?"

"I thought you knew that. I'm Boris Andrei Pavlov Glydr, Elsa's cousin. I'm Polish by birth, but I am now a naturalized American. When I took out American citizenship I took the name of Andrew Peters. Elsa—I've told you about Elsa already. She was one of the first-class scientists of our time. It was Elsa who discovered ZE Fission. Betterton was a young Canadian scientist who knew his job, but there was no more to him than that. He deliberately made love to Elsa and married her so as to be associated with her in the scientific work she was doing. When he realized what a big thing ZE Fission was going to be, he deliberately poisoned her."

"Oh, no, no."

"Yes. There were no suspicions at the time. Betterton appeared heart-broken, threw himself with renewed ardour into his work and then announced the ZE Fission discovery as his own. It brought him what he wanted. Fame and the recognition of being a first-class scientist. He thought it prudent after that to leave America and come to England. He went to Harwell and worked there.

"I was tied up in Europe for some time after the war ended. But I wasn't satisfied with the reasons for Elsa's death. When I did get back to the States I managed to get an order of exhumation for the body. Betterton must have heard of this, and got the wind up. I imagine that he'd already been approached by agents of our friend Aristides. Anyway he went, stipulating that his facial appearance was to be completely changed. You know the rest of it."

"And you followed him?"

"Yes. When the newspapers were full of his sensational disappearance, I came over to England. A rather brilliant scientist friend of mine had been approached by an American woman, a Mrs. Speeder. I discovered on arriving in England that she had also seen Betterton. I played up to her, expressing Left Wing views, rather exaggerating, perhaps, my scientific abilities. She was the link, all right. I thought, you see, that Betterton had gone behind the Iron Curtain where no one could reach him. Well, if nobody else could reach him, *I* was going to reach him."

His lips set in a grim line. "Elsa was a first-class scientist, and she was a beautiful and gentle woman. She'd been killed and robbed by the man whom she loved and trusted. If necessary I was going to kill Betterton with my own hands."

"I see," said Hilary, "oh, I see now."

"I wrote to you," said Peters, "when I got to England. Wrote to you, that is, in my Polish name, telling you the facts." He looked at her. "I suppose you didn't believe me. You never answered." He shrugged his shoulders. "Then I went to the Intelligence people. At first I went there putting on an act. Polish officer. Stiff, foreign and correctly formal. I was suspicious just then of everybody. However, in the end Jessop and I got together."

He paused. "This morning my quest has come to an end. Extradition will be applied for, Betterton will stand his trial. If he's acquitted, I have no more to say." He added grimly: "But he won't be acquitted. The evidence is too strong."

He stared down over the sunlit gardens towards the sea.

"The hell of it is," he said, "that you came out there to join him and I met you and fell in love with you. It has been hell, Olive. Believe me. So there we are. I'm the man who's responsible for sending your husband to the electric chair. We can't get away from it. It's a thing that you'll never be able to forget, even if you forgave it." He got up. "Well, I wanted to tell you the whole story from my own lips. This is goodbye." He turned abruptly as Hilary stretched out a hand.

"Wait," she said, "wait. There is something you don't know. I'm not Betterton's wife. Betterton's wife died at Casablanca. Jessop persuaded me to take her place."

He wheeled round, staring at her. "You're not Olive Betterton?"

"No."

"Good lord!" said Andy Peters. "Good lord!" He dropped heavily into a chair beside her. "Olive," he said, "Olive, my darling."

"Don't call me Olive. My name's Hilary. Hilary Craven."

"Hilary," he said softly. "I'll have to get used to that." He put his hand over hers.

At the other end of the terrace, Jessop, discussing with Leblanc various technical difficulties in the present situation, broke off in the middle of a sentence. "You were saying?" he asked absently.

"I said, *mon cher*, that it does not seem to me that we are going to be able to proceed against this animal of an Aristides."

"No, no. The big men always win. That is to say, they always manage to squirm out from under. But he'll have lost a lot of money, and he won't like that. And even Aristides can't keep death at bay for ever. He'll be coming up before the Supreme Justice before very long, from the look of him."

"What was it attracting your attention, my friend?"

"Those two," said Jessop. "I sent Hilary Craven off on a journey to a destination unknown, but it seems to me that her journey's end is the usual one, after all."

Leblanc looked puzzled for a moment, then he said: "Aha! yes! Your Shakespeare! Journeys end in lovers meeting."

"Or is it journey's end?" Mr. Jessop said absently to himself. "That girl has the makings of a very promising agent."

*THE END*

***"Destination Unknown," by Agatha Christie, will be published on November 1 by Collins at 10s. 6d.***

"Don't put quite so much paint on your brush, Harriet"

## ARCTIC HUNTER

*Continued from page 11*

force of his swinging head dragged him back into the water.

Finally, the attacks stopped. The walruses swam around our pan, furiously lashing the water. But if they tried to climb up, it was enough if we rushed to the side of our floating island to scare them away. The ice on which we stood was red with the blood of the two animals we had shot there.

I rejoined Ayranni. "What can we do now?"

"Wait," he said. "We must wait until walrus calm down. . . . But we cannot wait long. We drifting away."

### Chopped Out Tusks

The walruses were holding us at bay. We were prisoners on this little chunk of ice, and slowly we were being carried out to sea by the tide and the currents.

Ayranni, resigned to our lot, had started to skin one of the walruses. He was cutting wide rings of hide and pulling them off carefully. Later, from these rings would be made tough thongs, thirty or forty feet long. He chopped the tusks out of the two-inch-thick skull and cut up the meat. One of the walruses must have weighed a good two thousand pounds. The other was smaller.

"We can't stay, Ayranni," I said. "We are nearly fifteen miles from the shore. If we don't get off soon we will not have enough fuel to get back."

"We wait. Can't go. They watching."

Most of the walruses had climbed out of the water on to other icepans, surrounding us. They were still very restless, and watched us closely, swinging their heads back and forth.

"Sometimes they go back into water when you lower canoe. They know we stuck. They try keep us here."

Ayranni did not sound very hopeful. But I saw a lead opening up in the direction of the coast and I told him that we would just have to take the chance. The fuel shortage worried me.

"We can try," he said, and started to load big chunks of meat and rolls of skin into the boat. "Good God, Ayranni, we can't take all that along. We will be overloaded and lose speed."

But the Eskimo in him could not allow such waste. "I not leave this," he said.

Carefully and stealthily, we lowered the boat into the water. Nothing stirred. We stepped in and took our places. Still no movement on the floes around us. All the icepans were moving out to sea. Our heavily loaded boat offered more resistance to the currents and stayed behind.

Then Ayranni started the engine, and immediately the walruses splashed into the water. But we moved fast now. Ayranni gave the engine full throttle and we sliced the water. A few well-aimed shots kept the swimmers at a distance. We were safe.

About two miles from the coast our engine stopped, but the tide was our friend and carried us in.

I know, however, that the tide can be very treacherous at times. That treachery was the cause of one of my most perilous experiences. The adventure began when Sheeniktook, another guide, came into my igloo one morning and woke me up.

"Tuga"—another Eskimo—"say no dog food. Him say dogs hungry," he informed me. "They weak, like this." He dropped his head and let his arms hang limp to demonstrate. "We must hunt seal for dogs."

I walked up to the bluff beneath which we had camped and looked out over the sea. Land-locked ice stretched out for about two miles, and then came the closely packed drift ice, which seemed to move in with the tide.

There had been a great deal of movement in the icefield, and hummocks and pressure ridges had built up huge peaked formations. Each icepan looked like the stalagmite-studded bottom of a grotto. It was breaking-up time.

If we wanted to hunt in the icefields today we would have to do it on foot. It would be impossible to get a boat through, but it was safe for walking.

The dogs and sled were taken along until we reached the floe edge. There I freed myself from heavy equipment and the caribou parka that hampered my movements. I took my camera, my gun, cigarettes and chocolate. Then we split up. Tuga went one way and Sheeniktook and I another.

### Shot Was Well-aimed

We wandered for hours without finding a sign of life. We reached the last of the big icefloes—beyond, there were only small pans and scraps and pieces of ice. But, because there was more open water here, this would be the best place to spot some animals. And so it was. When we climbed a ridge we saw a big, square flipper seal sunning himself on the ice below us.

A well-aimed shot killed the seal, which must have weighed about six hundred pounds. Sheeniktook was delighted. He decided that it would be wise to get the dogs, who could drag this big load of meat back to the shore. We could have cut up the seal and carried the best pieces of meat with us, but we needed dog food badly and it was better to have all of it.

Sheeniktook took off his parka and threw it over the dead animal to keep the skin from drying out.

"Me back soon with dogs," he said. "You stay so I can find seal," and off he went. Soon he was out of sight.

I sat on the dead animal and looked out over the sea. The greyness had gone, the sun shone brightly and made


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the sea deep blue. The icepans had different colours, depending on how the light hit them. Some were a soft pink with light purple high spots, others were sea green, and there were many hues of blue. The little chunks remained white, and danced and whirled about in between. If you closed your eyes halfway and looked through your lashes, it seemed as if you were watching fireworks. Coloured "stars" twinkled in all directions. Overhead, seagulls winged by lazily and ducks moved along in formation high in the sky.

### Drifting To Sea

I had been sitting there for some time when I began to wonder what had happened to Sheeniktook. He should have been back by now. But maybe he had had trouble finding the dogs. He was sure to come as soon as he could.

I dozed.

Suddenly, I sat up. I had felt something. . . . I felt it again . . . it was movement . . . not just small movement, but something big all around me. I looked round and held my breath. I was drifting out to sea.

Slowly, but unmistakably, the icepan on which I was sitting was moving away from the shore. And that shore was more than ten miles away. The tide had turned and all the loose ice was moving with it.

I jumped up and hurried back, following the tracks that Sheeniktook had left on the mushy surface of the ice. I had to move fast. If I could not get back to land-locked ice I would be carried out twenty or thirty miles. If my icepan went too far, it would just float around in open water and slowly melt away or be ground up by other floats and bergs.

For a time, I followed the tracks—and then stopped. The next footprint was ten feet away, across a gaping lead of clear blue water. I looked around desperately. A few hundred yards away, my floe seemed to touch another.

Quickly, I went over and jumped across a small gap, and then walked back to find Sheeniktook's tracks again. But they did not seem to be on this icepan. Probably the next. I leaped again. Yes, there they were.

I was not taking precautions now, but moved along as rapidly as I could, picking my way from hummock to hummock, around peaks and pressure ridges, across yawning cracks.

The field was still staying together in a fashion. I could jump across the leads and sometimes I could move from one pan to another where they were pushed together. I lost and recovered the tracks time and again. Where I saw them, I followed them; when I lost them, I guessed my direction and roamed until I found them once more.

An off-shore wind came up, not a strong one, but it was strong enough to help the icepans along on their way out to sea.

### Saw The Two Guides

I jumped off a hummock, and the moment I jumped I knew I should not have done so. When I landed, my right leg went through to the knee. I quickly threw myself forward on the ice and crawled away from the hole. It must have been a seal hole that had filled up with slush and snow. My leg was soaked, but I did not have time to attend to that.

Stumbling on, I checked my compass every few minutes. Then, after I had climbed from one float on to another that was a few feet higher, I saw my two guides. They stood on a high ridge, a long distance away. I waved and they waved back. They had the dogs with them and were walking back and forth nervously.

I sat down for a moment, expecting that they would come for me now. But they did not. They just kept moving up and down on that ridge. I shrugged my shoulders and started walking again.

When I got near them I saw what had kept them from coming after me. The icepan on which I stood was thirty feet away from them. Those thirty feet were taken up by open water.

Sheeniktook knew what to do. "Wait!" he shouted, and then he climbed down and moved along the narrow ledge of his icepan to a place where another, smaller float was hugging it. He had a tent pole in his hand.

He stepped on to the small hunk of ice, which was about ten feet in diameter, and pushed off with his pole.

*They're not on land-locked ice*—it flashed through my mind, but it was just a flash and I forgot it. Slowly, Sheeniktook's precarious little island drifted towards me. He moved as close to the edge as he could and reached out with the pole. I grabbed it and pulled him in, and then stepped on to his float. We pushed off, wobbled back to the other side of the widening gap, and rejoined Tuga.

I was furious. "Why didn't you come to get me? Why didn't you fire your gun to warn me? You could have come across like we did now. What the devil is the matter with you fellows? I could have been lost for good."

They nodded gravely. "You see," Sheeniktook explained, "Tuga say I not go. I say Tuga not go. Too dangerous. So we stay."

"You mean to tell me that you just deserted me?"

I sat down and grinned at myself. *That nearly finished you, Moody,* I thought. *They thought it was dangerous and so they stayed.*

"You are really the most abominable characters I have ever met," I scolded them. "You are brave like the women who chew the skins to make your boots. Well, we'd better get back and make camp."

### Trapped On The Ice

We walked for twenty minutes, then Tuga, who was ahead of us, stopped with a grunt. Before us stretched an open space of calmly lapping water, a hundred feet wide.

It came back to me then. *Yes, they had not been on land-locked ice.* It was rather ironical; the two friends who had been so concerned about each other's safety had been drifting out to sea all the time.

I realized how serious our position was. There was still plenty of ice behind us, but in front of us the channel widened every minute.

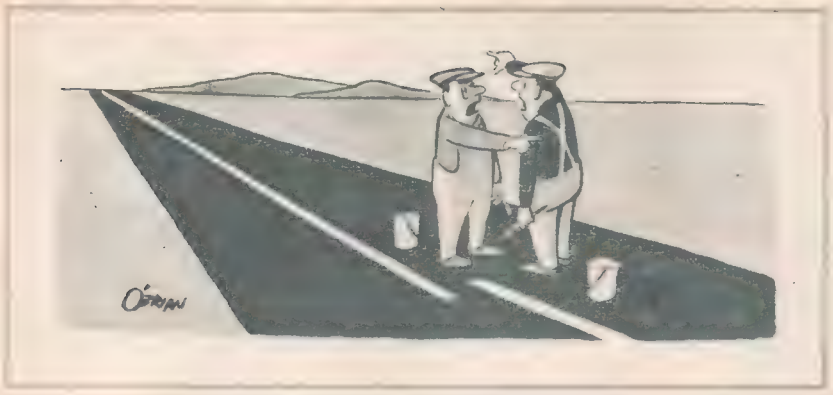
"We better go get seal," Tuga said.

"What would you do that for? It is

## WHO'S WHO?

**They look alike, but their lives have been very different. From the jumbled details below, can you provide each man with his potted biography—and his name? The answers are on page 41.**

| | |
|---|---|
| BORN: | A. Sixty-four years ago in Sutton Coldfield, a cobbler's son. |
| | B. Seventy-one years ago in Odessa, the son of a public notary. |
| FIRST JOB: | C. A professional politician. |
| | D. A butcher's boy. |
| HAS SAID: | E. "The essence of being fraternal is to tell you the truth." |
| | F. "It is possible to arrive at an understanding with some capitalists." |
| FAMOUS AS: | G. A public prosecutor and a republic representative. |
| | H. A leader of the world's largest body of workers. |



miles away and probably out of reach by now."

"Food," explained Tuga, and I saw clearly what we were in for.

We might be stranded in the ice-field for days. Our pan was a big one and it moved slowly, but there was no guarantee that it would come back to shore again.

### "Then We Would Die"

If the wind became stronger, or if a storm came up, we might be blown out for miles and miles and never come back. Our float would slowly crumble and disappear.

We would probably know nothing about it because we would die from exposure before then. The nights would be very cold, with temperatures of twenty-five or thirty degrees below zero, and we did not have sufficient covering.

The Eskimos walked off to see whether they could reach the seal, but they came back within a few minutes, reporting that we were completely surrounded by water.

I looked at my compass. We were drifting at a ninety-degree angle from the coast. The sun had dropped below the horizon, and it was getting very cold. The wind grew stronger, to a force of about five miles an hour. If it increased, we would be dead by the morning.

Tuga was the only one who was thickly clothed. I had left off my heavy outer wear when we set out for the hunt, and Sheeniktook's parka was draped over the dead seal. He stamped around, trying to keep warm, and I suddenly realized that my leg was getting very cold. The wet boot and the caribou skin legging were frozen.

I stripped them off, tore a piece off my shirt and wrapped it round my icy foot. Then I had no choice but to put the boot on again. Sheeniktook told me to keep running around.

Tuga seemed little concerned about us. He was comparatively warm. He had built a shelter of iceblocks and had folded himself up within. He was snoring loudly.

We built a shelter, too, but we could not stay motionless for more than a few minutes; then we had to get up again and run ourselves warm. I was hungry, and divided part of my chocolate with Sheeniktook.

It was very dark now. Around us were the noises of the icefield. We heard crushing sounds in the distance, where smaller floats were being ground into nothing. Occasionally, a loud thud or an explosion would wake up the seagulls that seemed to be sitting somewhere near us and send them squealing in the air.

### Close To Freezing

Once again I got up and started running. I heard more cracking nearby and wondered whether our ice was slowly breaking to pieces.

Close to freezing, and miserable, I wondered whether I would have to amputate my own leg in the morning. How could I do it?

I tried to go through the motions in my mind, but other thoughts fought for preference. Were we lost? Would we ever see land again? How would we die? From cold, or hunger? Or would we drown when the ice broke away? . . . I still had my gun. . . .

Sheeniktook suffered tremendously. I think he wore even less than I. I had offered him my sweater, but he refused. I wondered about Tuga. He could have given his friend something to cover himself with. But Tuga snored on.

"Sheeniktook, what can we do?" I asked.

"Don't know. Tide will change soon. Maybe tide brings us back, maybe not. We can eat dogs." Yes, we had the dogs.

"Listen!" he said. He knelt on the ice and held his ear close to the surface. "You can hear when tide changes." I listened, too, but heard nothing that had meaning to me. Sloshing water, soft creaking in the ice.

Sheeniktook got up again. "No change," and he started running and beating his chest.

We went through another hour of torture. My leg was numb, but it was not frozen yet. I rubbed it and it ached.

It must have been at about four in the morning, still completely dark, when Sheeniktook got down on his knees again and stayed in that position for a long time. Then he got up.

"Tide changes," he said.

It was true. If there was any movement in our float it was now definitely in an opposite direction.

We were going back—or north, or south. Who could tell? We would know at daybreak.

The movement became more noticeable. Then a soft thump; we had hit another icepan. Sheeniktook awakened Tuga. They held a long consultation. Then Tuga went away.

"He go and see other ice," Sheeniktook announced.

The first reflection of sunlight, even though its source was still far below the horizon, began to taint the sky.

Tuga came back. "Much ice around," he said. "We must try to get off."

### A Desperate Flight

We walked along the rim of our pan, first in one direction and then back. There were many ice floats around us.

A collision shook our block. A large pan had hit us on the shore side, or what I thought was the shore side. We hurried over and crossed on to the other slab of ice.

Cautiously, we picked our way from one pan to another. Sometimes we had to wait until leads closed up. A few times we went back because a wide channel blocked our progress. Once, the ice on which we stood was pushed under by a bigger pan that moved up over it and we had to jump to safety. The air was full of creaking, crashing sounds.

Finally, after two hours, we hit solid ice. It took another hour before we reached our sled. Sheeniktook and I wrapped ourselves in warm clothing and we all ate a little and moved on. The ice was not safe any longer. The sun rose in a purple sky and lent its colour to the ice. There were big cracks everywhere. Once, I looked back and saw that the tracks of our sled had moved apart six feet.

We hurried on. It became a desperate flight. Then we reached the shore and breathed freely again. I took the telescope and looked out to sea.

The ice was breaking up everywhere. Much of the field had not moved in at all. Big pans were drifting aimlessly, far out in the open water. Beneath us, the ice we had just left had shifted and cracked open.

I wondered how often a man can face death and escape it. THE END

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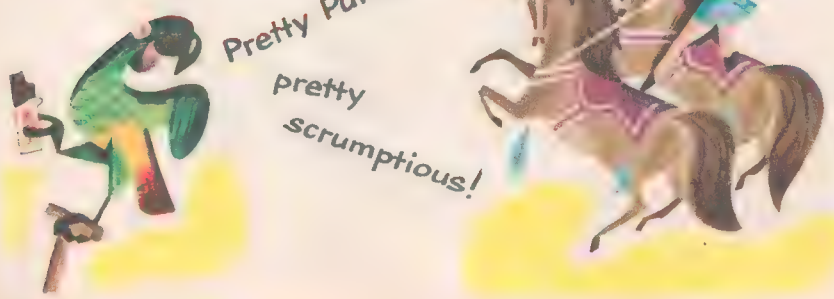


# Peach Flan — with Pastry!

**SHORT PASTRY**

**6 ozs. (6 heaped tablespoons) flour**

**3 ozs. Stork Margarine · 3 dessertspoons water · Pinch of salt**

**FILLING**

**1 heaped tablespoon apricot jam · ¾ pint thick sweetened custard**

**1 large tin sliced peaches (drained) · ¼ pint juice from tin**

**1 well-rounded teaspoon arrowroot · Sugar to taste**

Rub in Stork to sieved flour and salt. Mix with water. Roll out, and line 8-inch flan ring on baking sheet. Fill centre with crusts or beans on round of greaseproof. Bake 10 minutes in fairly hot oven (Regulo 6 : 400° F) on second shelf from top. Remove paper and beans, and bake for 20 minutes longer. Remove, cool, spread jam in bottom, add custard, and arrange peaches on top when firm. Blend the arrowroot with half of the juice, boil remainder with sugar, stir into arrowroot, return to pan, boil 3 minutes, stirring. Cool a little, and pour evenly over fruit. Allow to set.



Cut out this recipe and keep it — there'll be lots more to follow.

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## MY LEFT FOOT

*Continued from page 19*

shop windows, the ceaseless stream of red buses and motor-cars and cyclists, all seeming to be converging into one mass of noise and motion. I saw the tall, grey buildings outlined against the smoke-blue sky. Over all rose the sounds that issue up from the heart of a great city every moment of the day.

Soon I saw a park with beautiful trees lining its sides. "Regents Park," explained Dr. Warnants.

It made me think of the old Phoenix Park in Dublin and of the happy times I had as a child with my brothers down in the green meadows of Donnelly's Hollow, so many years ago, a happy child living in a bright world of his own—and here I was, close on seventeen, moving through the wide streets of London on my way to a momentous meeting.

I was silent and just sat staring out of the taxi window, because I knew that, in a short time, I would find out what course my future was to follow. I was anxious to know, yet frightened to find out because it would have such enormous effect on my life. It would be either the summit or the pit.

Finally, the car pulled up outside Middlesex Hospital. We were taken up in a lift to a little consulting room to await the arrival of Mrs. Collis. Dr. Warnants smiled as he helped me into a chair. "Scared?" he asked me.

I shook my head just to give myself courage.

"You are, you know," he continued, looking at me. "You're scared stiff, but you're too stubborn to admit it even to yourself. That's good."

### Mother Understood

Mother was perfect, she just sat calmly looking through some magazines that were on the table, munching some ham sandwiches she had brought along with her. This was the first time she had ever been outside Dublin, and yet she seemed as calm and cheerful as if she had been at home in the kitchen cutting bread for the children's tea.

But, though she did not show it, I knew very well that inwardly she was feeling and thinking the same things as myself, that she understood almost as well as I did, what this interview would mean to me. Without as much as speaking one word of help, she gave me a part of her own courage and strength to face up to it.

Suddenly the door behind me opened. I looked round and I saw that a man and a woman had come into the room. At once my eyes were drawn towards the small, thin woman with greying hair, handsome face and light, springy step. I felt sure that this was Mrs. Collis, and in her presence my doubts and apprehensions soon vanished. There was something about her—her slow smile, her complete naturalness and casual manner—that made me feel secure and self-possessed, no matter what her verdict might be.

"Sorry I'm late," she said to us, sitting on the edge of the desk and lighting a cigarette. For a few moments she took no notice of me and just sat chatting. Then she slid off the desk and strolled over to me.

"I was just letting some of your tension escape, Christy," she said smiling. "How old are you now?" she asked me, and when Mother attempted to tell her my age she held up her hand and said politely: "Let Christy tell me himself—just for fun."

### Mysterious Words

I managed to grunt that I was almost seventeen.

"Seventeen?" said Mrs. Collis. "Seventeen years a cripple is quite enough for anyone. Don't you think it's time you did something about it?"

I nodded my head in agreement.

"Yes, so do I!" she said. "Well then, let's see if we can make anything of you."

Then she called over the man she had come in with. He was young, small-sized, with sandy hair and a thin, pleasant face. "This is Mr. Gallagher," said Mrs. Collis as he came over, "one of our staff."" Afterwards we were to become very good friends, Mr. Gallagher and I.

I was stripped and put lying on the couch while Mrs. Collis examined me, helped by Dr. Warnants and Mr. Gallagher. I didn't understand what they were talking about most of the time. I caught words like "cerebrum," "basal ganglia," "inco-ordination," and many other mystic-sounding words which were perfectly unintelligible to my ear. Mrs. Collis had Mother explain to her the main details of my medical history while she examined me.

When the examination was over, Mr. Gallagher helped me on with my clothes again. After that the four of them—Mrs. Collis, Dr. Warnants, Mr. Gallagher and Mother—withdrew to the farther corner of the room to speak among themselves for a while. I sat alone on the couch, my heart beating quickly, waiting desperately for the verdict. I sweated all over. It was as if I were on trial for my life.

### The Doctor's Verdict

At last Mrs. Collis came across the room slowly and sat down on the couch beside me. "Well, Christy," she said. "You haven't come to London in vain. I can find no reason why you shouldn't be cured eventually."

My heart gave a leap of pure joy. I was to be cured! What else mattered now? All the old bitterness and heartache was changed now into an all-pervading happiness that lit up my face and made my heart dance wildly.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Collis. "You can be cured if you are prepared to do lots of really hard work over the next few years. But . . ." here she paused, looked steadily at me, and went on ". . . you must first make a big sacrifice. You must resolve never to use your left foot again."

My left foot! But that meant everything to me—I could speak only with

## WHO'S WHO?

**A D E H are the clues on page 38 which help to identify the man on the left as Mr. Arthur Deakin, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union.**

**B C F G identify the man on the right as Mr. Andrei Vyshinsky, Russia's chief delegate to the United Nations, and the chief prosecutor at the Soviet "purge" trials of the 1930s.**

"I'm in cold storage until I've had my

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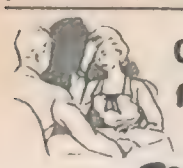

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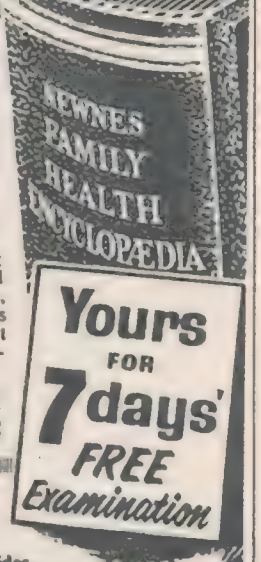


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my left foot, create only with it! It was my only means of communication with the outside world, my only way of reaching the minds of other people and making myself articulate and intelligible. The rest of me was useless, worthless. That one limb was the only workable thing in my whole body. Without it I would be lost, silent, powerless.

"Yes, I know it's tough," she said, interpreting my thoughts. "It's a tremendous sacrifice. But it's the only way out—there are no short cuts. If you continue to use your left foot you may one day become a great artist or writer with it—but you'll never be cured. You'll never walk, talk or use your hands, and without being able to do these things you cannot lead a normal life in any sort of society. So, it all simmers down to this—will you promise never to use your left foot again?"

### An All-out Battle

I saw the wisdom of what she had said. There was indeed to be no half measures. It was going to be an all-out battle from now on, and if I wanted to win I must put everything I had into it. I must pay a big price, perhaps even a cruel price, to win a bigger gain. It would be frightful, but it might bring victory in the end.

"I will," I said to Mrs. Collis—and they were the clearest words I had ever uttered.

She took my hand and pressed it, her eyes alight. "Good boy. It's not going to be easy. You must put your whole mind behind the work we're going to give you, and even then it will be slow, terribly slow, especially at your age. But the first step has been taken—the rest is up to you."

I did not know why I had to stop using my left foot in order to receive treatment, but Mrs. Collis explained it to me later. She told me that, although the use of my foot was good for me mentally, since it had provided an outlet for my imprisoned mind to express itself, it was bad for me physically, because the use of it imposed a great strain upon the rest of my body, so that even while it was releasing some of my mental tension, it was making worse the condition of my already crippled muscles. As long as I could make myself understood by using my left foot, I would never think of trying to use my hands. But if I could no longer use my foot, I would then have to concentrate on making use of the rest of my body.

### Worth Any Sacrifice

All very logical, I thought. But there was such a big difference between the word and the action, such a difference between *thinking* about these things and actually carrying them through! It wasn't just a question of tightening my shoe lace and tying up my poor old left foot. It went far deeper than that. I felt as if I was about to lock myself up and throw away the key.

Still, what could I do but make the "deal"? If I was too cowardly to do so, then the past would come rushing back upon me with all its bitterness and black pessimism. If I took the chance and "cut off" my left foot, as it were, then I'd enter into a new life, a complete new mode of thinking and acting, and that in itself would be something worth any sacrifice.

We flew back to Dublin that night and were met at the airport by Dr. Collis. It seemed that Mrs. Collis had already got in touch with him by phone and he was very delighted with her good news.

### Memorable Morning

He told me that he had recently succeeded in forming a Cerebral Palsy Clinic in Merrion Street, Dublin, and the St. John Ambulance Brigade had agreed to provide transport to bring the crippled children to and from the clinic for treatment from nine in the morning to twelve noon. I was to start attending it on the following Monday morning.

"There's nothing you can't conquer, Christy," he said to me, putting his hand on my shoulder. "And remember I'm with you all the way."

But I knew then that my first task was to conquer myself, and that the real battle was only beginning. . . .

I was very excited at the prospect of going to the clinic for the first time. I hadn't the least idea of what it would look like. I imagined cool marble walls, white-coated people and the constant smell of disinfectant.

On the memorable Monday morning, the St. John ambulance pulled up outside our door at about nine thirty. I glanced at it from the window apprehensively. I had always thought of ambulances as in some way connected with funerals: sombre, spirit-chilling things, full of bleeding bodies.

### His Fellow Patients

However, the driver was a cheerful, smiling man who helped Father to lift me. That made me a little less afraid. As I sat down on the seat I looked about at my fellow patients. I saw that I was very much the oldest among them. On the stretcher before me lay a small child, not more than a baby, with stiff arms and bent, crooked legs and a head that lay at a queer angle to the rest of his body.

Beside him sat a little girl with bright golden hair and very large eyes. She was very pretty, but her legs were thin and misshapen, with protruding bones, and her restless, shaking hands were like my own, but smaller and more fragile. She kept smiling the whole time, and trying to brush her fair ringlets out of her eyes.

On the seat next to me a little child lay, completely inert, with frozen features that were expressionless but for her eyes, which moved restlessly and inquiringly around. Those two eyes were the only living things about her — they were like two lighted windows in a dark house.

At last the ambulance drew into Merrion Street and came to a stop outside a big stone-grey building. I looked out of the window and caught sight of Dr. Warnants coming down the steps of the building. I felt reassured when I saw him again.

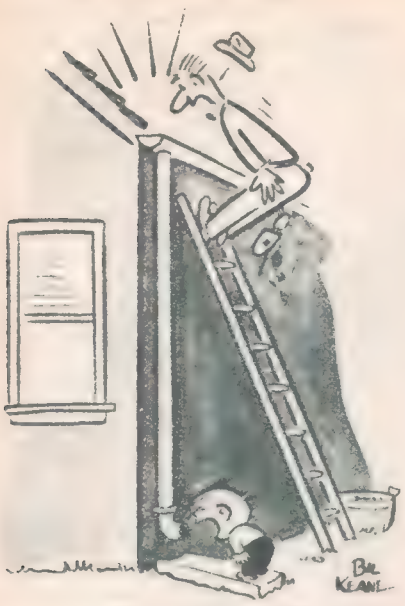
I couldn't walk and, as far as I could see, there was no sign of any car or chair to wheel me into the building. I looked at Dr. Warnants and he looked

# OH, MY BROTHER!

IT was fifty miles to the hospital, fifty miles of perilous track and jungle. Sher Singh was only twelve years old, but he did not hesitate. Little Kunwar was dangerously ill. . . . With his brother on his back, Sher Singh set out.

*Norah Burke's moving story is the fourth and last of Britain's entries in the* 1954 *World Prize Story Contest. It will appear, complete . . .*

**NEXT WEEK IN JOHN BULL**




"Daddy ! Lunch !"

back at me. "I'll have to do the strong man act again, old boy," he said with a shrug of his shoulders.

Then he gripped me round the legs and threw me over his back. As he carried me up the steps I saw a little gold plaque on the wall on which was inscribed: DUBLIN ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL. That sounds bad, I said to myself. I wonder what that awfully big word means anyway?

From my position over Dr. Warnants's shoulder I couldn't see my surroundings very well, but from a constant view of the floor and the lower parts of walls I knew that we were passing right through the building. We went down a flight of stairs, walked along a corridor for a while, opened a rickety old door at the end, and came out into daylight again.

"That's one journey," said Dr. Warnants in between pants. "Now for the other."

I could see we were in some kind of field or other, for there was grass on either side of the path, and trees. I managed to twist my head around and got a view of a long, narrow wooden building, single-storeyed, which looked like a gymnasium hut. As we approached it I heard sounds of children's voices, both laughing and crying —the majority seemed to be screaming.

The doctor pushed open the door and went in, still carrying me over his shoulder. The moment we entered, the full force of the noise hit me with an almost physical sensation. The din was terrific. Children were crying, roaring, screaming, banging toys and anything they could find against the walls and floor, kicking their legs in the air, stamping their feet, crawling and wriggling like crabs over one another. It was awful.

### Inside The "Nursery"

I looked about me as Dr. Warnants dumped me on the floor and wondered if I had been taken to the wrong place, for I saw that there was not one child there more than three years of age at the most. I thought it must be some kind of nursery. I discovered that the only other adult there besides Dr. Warnants and myself was a young man whom I recognized as Mr. Gallagher.

"No treatment this morning, Christy," said Dr. Warnants with a smile as he went by me, carrying two babies in his arms to the other end of the room. "You can just relax and look on."

And yet it was treatment in itself, just looking on. It was an instruction, an education in human suffering, a new, rather frightening experience for one who, until lately, had never seen life beyond the walls of his own home. In the light of this altogether new aspect of life which now lay before me, the things I had seen at Lourdes were only a shadow. This was the substance, the fulfilment of a foreboding.

The afflicted people I had met at the Grotto in Lourdes were grown men and women, some in great pain, of course, with nothing but wrecked lives behind or before them, but still capable of understanding their own affliction or at least becoming resigned to it.

But here was no such thing. Here there was no reasoning, only helplessness—helplessness and near-horror in the form of twisting, twining babies with crooked little limbs, misshapen heads and distorted features. Some were lying huddled on the floor, inert and motionless. Others were convulsed with wild, endless movement that shook their small bodies as if an electric current were constantly passing through them.

Suddenly I realized for the first time what I myself had looked like as a child.

### Instead Of Pity . . .

I could easily have pitied them, so young, so helpless and afraid, so entirely dependent upon others, but I did not, for I remembered how bitterly a look of pity had hurt me once. Instead of pity, I began to feel a sympathy, an affinity with those children, a link that enabled me to see and to *feel* the real personalities which lay behind the grotesquely working faces and tense, taut limbs, a kind of brotherly insight that let me see beyond the twisted muscle and bone to the imprisoned minds that lay inside. I saw that I was not the only one who was shut away behind prison bars.

When I got home that day all the family crowded round me, wanting to know what the clinic was like. But I could say nothing, for I had seen something and felt something that no words of mine could describe.

After about a week at the clinic, during which time, as Dr. Warnants put it, I was being "conditioned," I was slowly initiated into the mode of treatment. I found that it was exactly similar to that which I had been receiving at home, except, of course, that it was on a much broader, more organized scale. The exercises were more detailed, more intricate—and a lot more arduous to perform.

At first, to be quite truthful, I felt rather silly while doing them. I felt I was a ridiculous sight, sitting among a roomful of kids, a bit silly having to go through the same exercises as them—in fact, I felt like an elephant among a lot of kittens, and I was sure that was how I looked, too.

### "Why Am I Here?"

Often, as I pulled myself along on my stomach in among the children—this was all part of the exercises, for I wasn't allowed to move about on my behind as I used to do—I'd stop suddenly, as though becoming aware of my surroundings for the first time.

I would look slowly around at all the twisting and inert forms lying about me on the floor, at the faces of Dr. Warnants and Mr. Gallagher as they bent over the children, at the ceiling with its knotted brown beams, at the high windows through which I caught glimpses of blue sky and white cloud and the foliage of the trees—I'd see all these things, and suddenly I'd pause and ask myself: "What am I, Christy Brown, doing here?

"What does all this mean to me—this strange place called a clinic, those two doctors going about in their shirt-sleeves, those crippled children with their funny twisted bodies and lolling heads—what have I to do with all this? Why am I here, in this queer place, instead of writing in the bedroom at home?"

Yes, it was true: I still hadn't become accustomed to the "outside world" as yet. I still couldn't grasp the reality of it all—the fact that I was now a part of this strange and bewildering, this new and fast-moving world of people and places.

I was like a caveman, shut away for years in the darkness and confinement of his own narrow quarters, and now suddenly thrust upon the vast teeming world, gazing blankly, as if seeing the light of day for the first time and being blinded by all that it revealed to him.

Many times, as I sat hunched on the floor staring unseeingly before me, I'd feel a toe nudging me from behind. I'd

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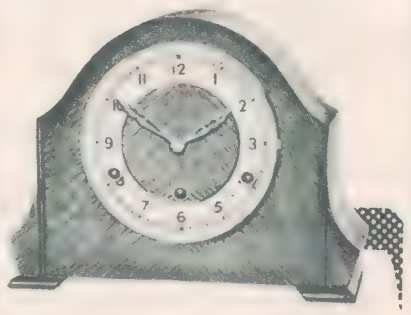

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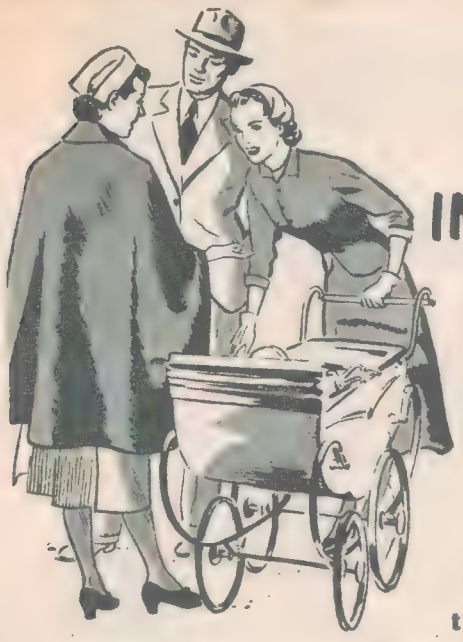

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start and look around, and there would be Dr. Warnants, standing above me and smiling.

"Day-dreaming again!" he'd say to me. "Thinking of all the books you're going to write some day, eh? Snap out of it, old boy! There's a job to be done, you know."

Yes, I knew there *was* a job to be done, and quite a job, too. A job that wouldn't be done in a year, two years, or even five years—a job, in fact, that would take a lifetime. I knew that quite well. And yet I couldn't help stopping and thinking of all that had happened to me before I realized that such a job *could* be done.

### The Grim Old Days

I couldn't help thinking now and then of the old days—not the *good* old days to me, but rather the grim old days, the days when I had nothing to hope for or live for, nothing to dull the pain of the immediate present or to brighten the darkness of the distant future, nothing in fact but the pain and inner anguish that grew with the growing awareness of myself and the affliction that I couldn't understand and hated.

It was true—I hated my own affliction, I despised it. I was tormented, revolted at the very thought that I had been made different—cruelly different—from other people. And yet I was soon to realize that it was this very affliction, which I regarded in my worst moments as a curse from God, that was to bring a strange beauty into my life.

I had been attending the clinic for about a year when it happened. It was a fine spring morning in April and the clinic had just begun to close for another day. The ambulance men had taken the children out to the waiting car and I was the last one left.

I was sitting in a rickety old wheelchair outside the door, enjoying the warm April sunlight and noticing how green and crystal the grass looked, and hearing the branches of the trees rustle and murmur in the light fresh wind. Everything was still, for the clinic room was deserted.

Suddenly I heard a noise coming from the farther end of the gravel path. It was the sound of light footsteps. I looked up from the ground where I had been idly scattering some fallen leaves with my foot. I caught sight of something red moving through the trees. Then the figure rounded the little bend and came in view. It was a girl.

I bent my head again quickly and tried very hard to seem absorbed in kicking the trampled leaves hither and thither. I heard the footsteps come nearer. She must be very close to me now, I said to myself. I didn't want to look up, knowing that I might have to speak to her and knowing that I could not speak normally. Don't be a fool, I said to myself.

I looked up timidly as the strange girl came to within a few feet of me. It was like seeing a vision. There was the green foliage of the trees in the background and the waving shadows of the branches on the dewy grass. The sun, from behind, was mingled with her fair hair, became diffused in it, so that it seemed as if a halo surrounded her.

As she came forward I saw she was a little above average height, brown-haired and green-eyed. Her features were of almost classical beauty; they seemed so clear-cut, so finely chiselled and defined as to have been sculptured out of pure white marble. There was a fresh bloom on her cheeks that spring morning and a certain serenity in her eyes that made me stare and stare.

It was rude of me, I knew, but I was quite helpless to look away. I remember telling myself quite distinctly as she advanced: "This is the most beautiful girl I've ever seen!"

Seeing no one about but me, she appeared to hesitate for a moment and then approached the chair firmly. "Is Mr. Gallagher about, please?" she asked, smiling.

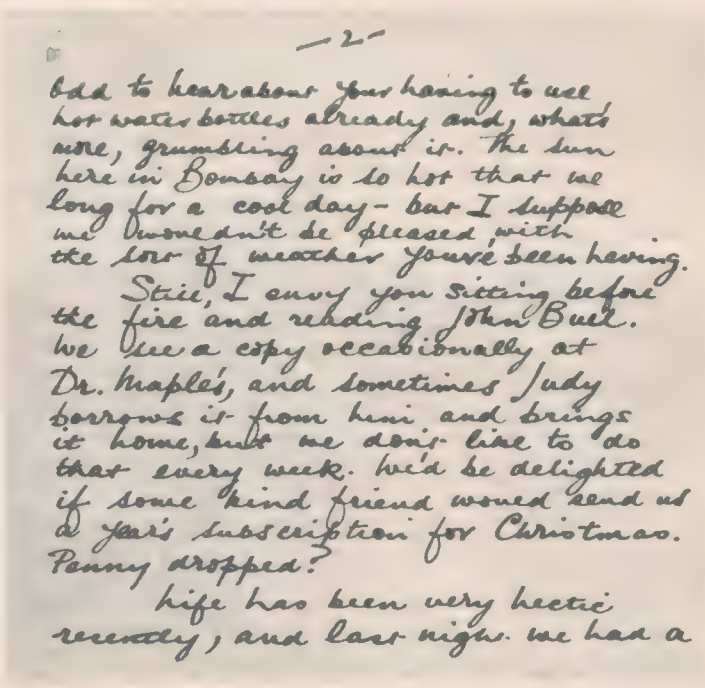
### Her Name Was Sheila

I was absolutely tongue-tied. It wasn't only because of my usual speech difficulty. In the end I spluttered out that Mr. Gallagher would be back soon, and she smiled again and went by me into the empty clinic.

A week passed. I was just about to give up hope of seeing her again, when I came into the clinic one morning and the first thing I saw, as I was wheeled in, was the same girl, kneeling on the floor beside one of the children.

Slowly, bit by bit as the days went on, I got to know little things about her: she was a university graduate, she came from Galway, and her name was Sheila.

As I sat in my corner, I watched her and saw how her hair tumbled about her face when she knelt and chatted with the children, how she brushed it back impatiently with a sweep of her arm. When she glanced across at me



—2—

bad to hear about your having to use hot water bottles already and, what's more, grumbling about it. The sun here in Bombay is so hot that we long for a cool day—but I suppose we mustn't be pleased with the sort of weather you've been having.

Still, I envy you sitting before the fire and reading John Bull. We see a copy occasionally at Dr. Maple's, and sometimes Judy borrows it from him and brings it home, but we don't like to do that every week. We'd be delighted if some kind friend would send us a year's subscription for Christmas. Penny dropped?

Life has been very hectic recently, and last night we had a

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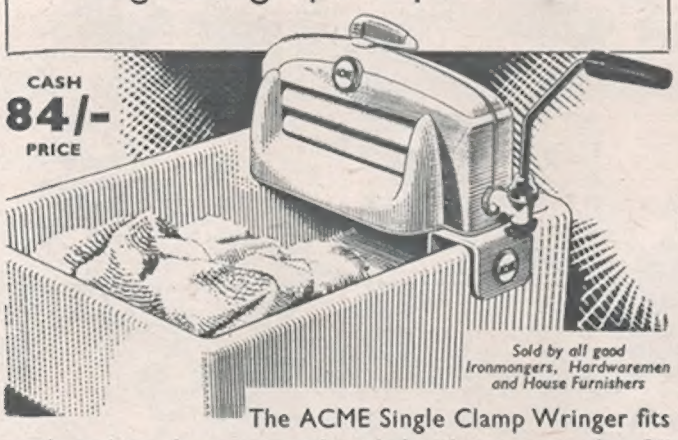


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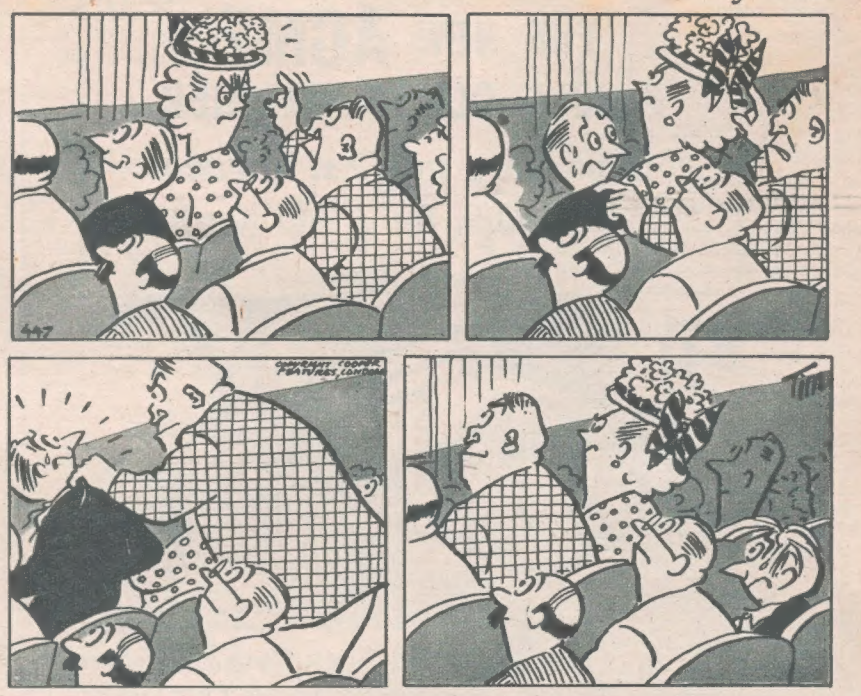
## *OH, JOHNNY!* — *by TIM*



unexpectedly, I turned my head away in confusion and hummed a tune.

One morning later I was feeling particularly despondent within myself. I sat, leaning against the wall, my eyes downcast and my thoughts slipping back into the old mood of hopelessness which now and then came sweeping upon me from the past.

Then a voice said to me suddenly: "Cheer up, Christy!"

I jerked around and found Sheila smiling at me encouragingly from the middle of the room. That one smile plucked the depression from me.

### Breaking The Barriers

After that we began to know each other quite well. I began to go through my exercises with greater zest. Then one morning, greatly daring, I brought her in a letter which I had dictated to my brother the night before. She took it home with her, read it, and brought me a reply next morning.

Of course, I lost no time in answering, and so we began corresponding with each other. Thus I had found one way of breaking down one of the greatest barriers, if not *the* greatest barrier, standing between me and other people—the great speech barrier. What I couldn't say with my lips, I would express on paper.

The walls were indeed still very high around me, but I was scaling them one by one. Scaling them—yes, breaking loose from them—yes. But what lay outside these walls?

People spoke generally of "freedom," of "emancipation" and "release" from physical affliction. But I found it wasn't just a question of fighting against my own handicap like a brave little hero and having them clap me on the back and tell me "I would get there soon." If by "there" they meant physical independence at last, that was all right, but if they also meant by it *complete* independence, complete freedom from all mental and emotional conflict, then they were quite wrong.

For I was now finding out for myself that the pain and bitterness I had felt in the past during my "captivity," were as nothing compared with the pain and bitterness I now felt at the very time when I was struggling out of my chains. I was now feeling the pain which clever people try to disguise under the name "awakening" and "enlightenment."

This was no childish melancholy that came and went like April showers, but adult pain, which left a deeper impression, a deeper *scar* upon my mind. I felt myself coming to a greater, a more persistent, awareness of my own needs, and that in itself was pain enough. But it went deeper when I also realized the impossibility of finding any adequate expression for such needs, when I saw that no matter how I might overcome my physical limitations, my inner, emotional life, the life that really mattered in the end, would never, *could* never really be "normal." It would just have to lie bottled up inside me, suppressed instead of expressed.

In time, indeed, I might lead a more independent life. But I knew deep inside me that there would always be something missing—my lack of really "normal" human expression and relationship. No matter how well I might conquer my handicap I would never be a normal individual leading a normal life. The old "difference" would always remain. I wanted so desperately to love and be loved, but. . . .

It was a bitter realization, but a true one, a necessary one. What good would it do me if I were to shut my eyes and turn my back on every unpleasant fact about myself? I was tempted to do that many times, but I was only putting off the final ordeal a little longer; it had to come some time. It came, it made me sad, bitter for a time, but in the end it also made me stronger within myself. If I could never really be like other people, then at least I would be like myself and make the best of it.

So it was that ultimately Sheila was the best friend that I could possibly have found. She was like a mirror in which I could see myself at last without disguise. She was the first milestone in my adult life, and through her I learned to travel my road without falling into any of the pitfalls along the way.

### The Box Of Letters

We wrote a lot to one another, mine dreamy, fanciful letters, hers full of wisdom:

> "In one of your letters you say how some people think you a hero, and that you don't feel very heroic. I'm not very sure what a hero is, but here is my opinion of you: The good God gave you an excellent brain and an artistic streak. He also gave you a physical handicap. With the foregoing mental equipment your present struggle against your athetosis is inevitable. . . . Remember your mother, too, without whose good sense you might easily have turned into a most objectionable young man always talking of *what might have been*. . . ."

I have a little brown box at home in my study, closely guarded, inside which lie every one of the letters I got from Sheila, all bound together with a piece of sentimental blue ribbon. Thirty-two in all. I counted them the other day. . . .

*NEXT WEEK: Day of triumph for me and my left foot*

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|---|---|
| The Peace Tree | The Dancing Flames |
| Life Today | Crooners, Comics And |
| Band Of Brothers | Father's Cold |
| With Germany | Belle Of The Office |
| Man In The Street | "Tally-ho!" |
| For Years To Come | In Solitary Splendour |
| Invader Winter | Modern Romeo |
| Bolder And Bolder | Shivering Like A Jelly |
| Voice In The Darkness | Unearthed |
| Stole Her Heart | On The Bookie's Yacht |

**Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sleepytown's New..... | The.....Championship |
| Likes To Be..... | Wants Another..... |
| In.....'s Day | It's A Hollywood....., So |

**POST ENTRY:** "Bullets" 1,960, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

**RULES** 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in "*Bullets*" *Bulletin* dated November 20 and in JOHN BULL dated November 27), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.
**(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, November 13, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,960 result.)**

## CHIEF WINNERS—"BULLETS" No. 1,955

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EDWARD SHARP & SONS LTD.
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